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ŚRĀVASTĪ IN INDIAN LITERATURE

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## SRĀVASTĪ IN INDIAN LITERATURE

Srāvastī, the ancient capital of the Kosala country, is one of the eight great places connected with the life of Buddha and is held in special veneration by Buddhists all over the world. It was the scene of the Great Miracle of Buddha and the monastery at Jetavana outside the city was for a number of years hallowed by the presence of the Master. Most of the sermons and sayings attributed to Buddha are stated in the Buddhist sacred books to have been delivered during the Master's sojourn at the Jetavana monastery.

### INTRODUCTION

IN the following pages an attempt has been made to present a picture of the holy site of Śrāvastī from ancient Indian literature. The literary materials which lie scattered in Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina texts and commentaries, as also in the itineraries of the two celebrated Chinese pilgrims, Fā-Hien and Hiuen Tsang, have been brought together in a handy form so as to render them useful to the archæologist and the student of history.

Saheth-Maheth<sup>1</sup> is the modern equivalent of the site of Śrāvastī of ancient fame. Saheth, the first member of the twin name, is applied to the site of Jetavana, while Maheth, the second name, denotes the much larger site of the walled city of Śrāvastī. The name Saheth-Maheth thus denotes not only the site of the city proper with that of Jetavana but also the adjoining areas of archaeological importance.

The entire site lies on the borders of Gonda and Bahraich districts of Oudh in the United Provinces, and can best be reached from Balarampur, a station on the Gonda-Gorakhpur branch of the B. N. W. Railway. It is situated ten miles from Balarampur, with which it is connected by a good motor road. It can also be reached from Bahraich which is at a distance of about 26 miles. Just to the right of the road from Balarampur to Bahraich and not more than eight hundred feet away from the road lies Saheth, while Maheth is about one-third of a mile still farther.

The ruins at Saheth consist of the plinths and foundations of different monastic establishments and a few stūpas which are, more or less, in a well-preserved state. The remains of the surrounding walls and intervening spaces are covered over with weeds and small trees thinly distributed over the entire site. The site of Maheth with its high rampart walls all round is densely covered with an undergrowth of shrubs making it almost inaccessible in certain parts. No ruins either

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<sup>1</sup> This is the correct spelling of the name according to local pronunciation. Cunningham gives the name as *Sāhet-Māhet*, while Vincent A. Smith has *Sāhet-Māhet*. Hoey changes it into *Set-Mahet*. *An. R. A. S. I.*, 1907-8, p. 84. Saheth is phonetically connected with *Sāvattthi*, the Prākṛit form of Śrāvastī and Maheth seems to have been coined as a jingling companion, as so often found in Indian place names.



of the royal palace or of any residential houses have yet been traced. The present remains consist of a few Brahmanical and Jain temples, and mediæval tombs, all built apparently on the remains of older Buddhist religious edifices. A number of gates give access to the site through the walled enclosure, of which only four appear to have been the original gates. The outlying areas show brick remains and unimportant mounds. Excavations at the mounds of Saheth and Maheth were first started by General Cunningham in January 1863. He discovered the famous Bodhisattva image set up by Bhikshu Bala in one of the ruined shrines of Saheth, the dedicatory inscription of which went to confirm his identification of Saheth with Jetavana and Maheth with the city of Śrāvastī. His first operations were followed up by Mr. W. C. Benet, C. S., who apparently did some digging at the Pakkī Kuṭī mound.<sup>1</sup> Cunningham resumed his explorations at Saheth in 1876, in course of which he exposed some sixteen distinct buildings, mostly stūpas and small shrines of a comparatively late date. He identified the small shrine in which the colossal Bodhisattva image was discovered with the *Kosamba Kuṭī* mentioned in the inscription on the pedestal of the image, and the similar shrine to the north of this with the *Gandha Kuṭī*.

Almost simultaneously with Cunningham's operations at Saheth Dr. W. Hoey conducted excavations at Maheth, when he recovered some images from the ruins of Sobhnāth, the Jain temple in the western area of Maheth. In course of the more extensive explorations conducted by Hoey from 15th December 1884 to 15th May 1885,<sup>2</sup> a number of monuments both at Saheth and in and around Maheth were brought to light. He, too, identified some of the buildings with monuments referred to by Fā-Hien and Hiuen Tsang, but failed in most cases to give any convincing reasons.<sup>3</sup> One of the important discoveries made by Hoey was a well-preserved stone inscription dated Sanivat 1176 (=1119 A.D.) and recording the foundation of a monastery by one Vidyādhara, a counsellor of Madanapāla, the Gāhaḍavāla king of Kanauj. The inscription was picked up from the courtyard of a monastery (No. 21) occupying the south-western corner of Saheth.<sup>4</sup>

Twenty-three years later, on the 3rd of February, 1908, Dr. J. Ph. Vogel started excavations at the site with the assistance of Mr. (now Rai Bahadur) Daya Ram Sahni and carried on the work till the end of April of that year. A detailed account of excavations carried out by them is contained in the Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India. Vogel describing the operations at Maheth and Sahni those at Saheth.

Vogel laid bare the rampart walls of Maheth and its different gates, and gave in his report a clear account of the extent and configuration of the site. Of the important mounds in Maheth, he explored the *Pakkī Kuṭī*, the *Kachchī Kuṭī* a stūpa to the east of the *Pakkī Kuṭī* and east of north from the *Kachchī Kuṭī* (stūpa A), the *Naushara Gate*, and the Jain temple of Sobhnāth. The most important finds made in the ruins of the *Kachchī Kuṭī* consisted of terracottas

<sup>1</sup> A cursory notice of Benet's excavations appeared in the *Gazetteer of the Province of Oudh, Allahabad*, 1878. Vol. III, p. 256.

<sup>2</sup> *J. A. S. B.*, 1907-08, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> *J. A. S. B.*, 1892, Extra number.

<sup>4</sup> Now in the Lucknow Museum. Edited by Kielhorn, *Ind. Ant.*, XVII, 1888, pp. 61 ff.

of special interest from both artistic and historical points of view. A good number of Jain sculptures were recovered from the ruins of the Sobhnāth temple.

At Saheth exploration work was restricted to the more important structures which had been left unfinished by Cunningham and Hoey. Vogel laid bare the remains of a number of monastic buildings, and several stūpas and temples. Among the finds were a number of important Buddha and Bodhisattva images in stone, datable from the 5th to the 12th century, a number of terracottas, clay tablets and sealings, and a few silver coins. But the most important find was that of an inscribed copperplate of Govindachandra of Kanauj which was found at the north-west corner of cell No. 23 of Monastery No. 19 under the floor. It furnished the most valuable data regarding the identification of Saheth with Jetavana and consequently of Maheth with Śrāvastī.

Excavations were resumed in 1910-11 under the direct supervision of Sir John Marshall who 'had the advantage of uninterrupted help from his Excavation Assistant, Paṇḍit Daya Ram Sahni'. He examined several outlying monuments, namely, the *Panahiyā Jhār*, the *Kharahuā Jhār*, the *Orā Jhār* and the *stūpa* at Bhiṭṭi: but his main objective was the area of the Jetavana garden. His efforts were directed to continuing the work of Vogel and penetrating at the same time to the earlier levels, where he hoped to find some tangible evidence as to the topography of the site during the earlier centuries of the Christian era. The valuable finds at the site consist of a few inscriptions and sculptures, a good number of coins, a fairly large number of inscribed seals and sealings, some terracottas with reliefs and interesting specimens of potteries and bricks.

The earliest set of epigraphs<sup>1</sup> consists of two inscriptions, both of which record in identical terms pious donations of Bhikshu Bala and belong to so early an age as the reign of Kaṇishka (or Huvishka). The historical interest of these two epigraphs lies in the fact that similar records of Bhikshu Bala are found also at Sārnāth and Mathurā. In connection with the inscriptions of Bala we may just point out two inaccurate renderings, viz., in taking (1) the locative expression 'śāvastiyē' or (*Śrāvastīyam*) to mean 'In Śrāvastī' and (2) 'āchāryyānam sarvāstivādīnam parigrahe' to mean 'as the property of the Sarvāstivāda school of teachers.' The first expression which corresponds with the Pāli *Sāvattīhiyam* should rather be rendered: 'adjoining Śrāvastī (*Sāvattīhim upanissāya*)'. The second expression which is obviously a case in apposition with *Bhagavato chaṃkrame* preceding it, must be taken to mean 'in the possession of the Sarvāstivāda school of teachers.' According to this interpretation, the expression characterised the entire site of Jetavana, and not directly the gifts made by Bala.

The Bodhisattva statue inscription of Śivadhara and his brother is an epigraph of the same early Kushāṇa age. In connection with the interpretation of this epigraph by Sahni (*An. R. A. S. I.*, 1908-9, p. 135 foll.), we may suggest that the term *Velishta* in the descriptive expression *Kshatriyānam Velishtānam* stands rather for a *gotra* than for a place-name. We may also notice that the word *Bodhisattvā* occurs as a plural and not as a singular form, which is evident

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 180 ff.

also from the plural form *kṛitā* in the expression *Bodhisattvā kṛitā*. If so, one is to understand that the author of the inscription had installed not one, but **several** Bodhisattva images.

The next in point of date is a two-line inscription incised on the base of an image of Avalokiteśvara. It is in Sanskrit and written in Nāgarī characters of the 8th or 9th century A.D. Next comes the Buddhist stone inscription of Vidyādhara which is dated in Samvat 1176 (=1119—20 A.D.). Last comes the copper-plate of King Govindachandra of the same Gāhaḍavāla dynasty of Kanauj.

Among the inscriptions which are earlier even than the inscriptions of Bala and which have a bearing upon Śrāvastī and Jetavana, we may mention, in the first instance, the Sohgaury Copper-plate containing an order either issued by or issued to the *mahāmātras* of Śrāvastī (*Savatīyanam mahāma[t]ranam sāsane*). Of the remaining inscriptions all are attached as labels to two of the Bharhut bas-reliefs. Of the two labels attached to the scene of Prasenajit's visit to Buddha, one records the name of the king (*Rājā Pasenadi Kosalo*), and the other refers to a shrine (*Bhagavato dhamachakam*). Of the three labels attached to the scene of dedication of Jetavana, the first refers to the act of dedication by Anāthapiṇḍika (*Jetavane Anadhapiṇḍiko deti koṭi-saṃthātana ketā*), the second to the *Gandha Kūṭī* and the third to the *Kosamba Kūṭī*.

Among the sculptures found at the site, many are Buddhist, a few are Jaina, and some are Brahmanical. The colossal headless Bodhisattva statues discovered by Cunningham, the seated Bodhisattva image, of which the lower portion alone with the pedestal was unearthed by Sahni, the statuette of Buddha seated on a lion-throne, and a few other fragments are the few specimens of Buddhist sculpture belonging to the Kushāṇa period. The material of all these sculptures is invariably the red spotted sandstone and stylistically they all belong to the Mathurā school of sculpture which developed, during the early Kushāṇa period, a distinctive artistic style of its own. In fact Mathurā during this period supplied images, large and small, to Sārnāth, Prayāga and Śrāvastī, and thus laid the foundation of that eastern school of sculpture which found its best expression in the age of Gupta suzerainty and had its centre at Sārnāth. The colossal headless Bodhisattva statue of Śrāvastī is artistically on a par with the Bodhisattva statues of Sārnāth, Allahabad<sup>1</sup> and Mathurā. The donee of the three statues, at Sārnāth, Śrāvastī and Mathurā, was one and the same person, the monk Bala; the material and style of the images are precisely the same, and it seems that they were the work of one and the same sculptor. It is highly probable that all the three sculptures were executed at Mathurā, and then carried to the respective places to be installed there. The seated Bodhisattva statue of which we have only the lower portion also belongs to the same artistic tradition and was similarly executed at Mathurā.

Of a somewhat later period (late 2nd or early 3rd century A.D.), but affiliated to the same Kushāṇa tradition, is the statuette of the Buddha seated on the lotus-throne. The sculpture has a very striking similarity in style and appearance

<sup>1</sup> The Bodhisattva statue of Prayāga is now housed in the Allahabad Municipal Museum. It bears an inscription on the pedestal and is dated in the 2nd year of Kaṇishka's reign. *Vide The Calcutta Review*, 1934.

with a seated Buddha image now in the Mathurā Museum. As Dr. Vogel suggests, "Both may well have come from the hand of one and the same artist." To this period may also be assigned the small fragment representing the lower portion of a small image of Bodhisattva carved out of red sandstone and executed in the usual style of the late Mathurā School.

It is well-known that the Mathurā school was to a great extent responsible for the early development of the school of sculpture at Sārnāth where Gupta art came to find its profoundest expression. But it seems strange that the four centuries (4th—7th) of the glorious Gupta tradition of either Mathurā or Sārnāth hardly left any trace at Śrāvastī, except in the large number of terracottas recovered from both Saheth and Maheth. In fact, no artistic remains of any importance belonging to the Gupta tradition have yet been brought to light from the ruins of Śrāvastī.

The image of Kuvera or Jambhala in spotted red sandstone is clearly an example of the later Gupta tradition that was at work at Mathurā. It had already acquired some early mediæval characteristics with the stamp of the later Gupta tradition. At about the same period may be dated the image of Avalokiteśvara seated in *ardhaparyāṅka* attitude on a lotus and flanked by two standing female figures. It has on it the same impress of later Gupta tradition not of Mathurā but of the eastern school of Sārnāth and Magadha.

The rest of the sculptural remains of Śrāvastī definitely belong to the mediæval tradition. The statuette of the Buddha seated cross-legged in *vyākhyāna mudrā* on a lotus, the granite relief representing the story of the offering of honey to Buddha by a monkey, and the three-faced head of Trailokyavijaya, etc., all may, in point of style, be said to belong to the 9th century A.D. and affiliate themselves to the sculptural tradition of the school of Magadha. To the same tradition may be ascribed the very beautiful fragmentary image of Lokanātha, the fragmentary blue schist image of Avalokiteśvara seated in *līlāsana*, the fragmentary image of Śiṅhanāda Lokeśvara seated in *mahārājāṅgā* attitude, and the relief representing among others an image of Tārā. Their facial and physiognomical type, their dress and ornaments, poses and attitudes, their decorative elements, and their style and technique bear so striking a similarity with the sculptures of the eastern school of Magadhan tradition of the same period that they may at once be said to affiliate themselves to the latter. The same is equally true of the two Brahmanical sculptures representing an image of Gaṇeśa, and another, a female statue broken into several fragments.

The Jain sculptures recovered from the *Kachchī Kuṭī* at Maheth represent a different art-tradition. The material of these sculptures is buff sandstone. It is not unlikely that they were the work of one and the same group of artists working under a common supervision. Considered from their general style and technique, their facial and physiognomical features, they seem to affiliate themselves to the mediæval school of Central India and Rajputānā.

After the 13th century Śrāvastī seems to have lost its importance as a centre of art and religion.

## I.—ORIGIN OF THE NAME AND TOPOGRAPHY

Sāvattthī is the Pāli and Ārdhamāgadhi form of the Sanskrit name Śrāvastī. According to Buddhaghosha, the city of Sāvattthī was so called because it was originally the dwelling place of Savattha the sage. Kākandī, Mākandī and Kosambī are place-names similarly derived, from Kakanda, Makanda and Kosamba respectively. Sāvattthī was thus a religious settlement to begin with, and the city subsequently grew up around it. This derivation is suggested of course, by the etymologists or grammarians.<sup>1</sup> In other words, Buddhaghosha and other Pāli scholiasts sought to account for the form of the name according to Pāṇini's rule (4-2-69 : *tasya nivrāsah*).

So far as Brahmanical literature goes, in the two Epics as well as the Purāṇas, Śrāvastī is said to have been named after its royal founder, King Śrāvasta or Śrāvastaka. All of them agree in crediting Śrāvasta or Śrāvastaka with the building of the city named after him, but differ as to the lineage of the king. According to the Vāyu Purāṇa, Śrāvasta was the sixth in descent from Vikukshi, son of Ikshvāku, and his father's name was Andhra.<sup>2</sup> In the Matsya and Brahma Purāṇas,<sup>3</sup> however, Śrāvasta is mentioned as the son of Yuvanāśva and the grandson of Ādra (Andhra according to the Vāyu Purāṇa and Chandra according to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa<sup>4</sup>). The Mahābhārata represents Śrāvastaka as the son of Śrāva and the grandson of Yuvanāśva.<sup>5</sup> Several kings of Śrāvastī are mentioned in later Sanskrit texts. The Harsha-charita,<sup>6</sup> for example, refers to Śrutavarma who had once been the king of Śrāvastī. His kingdom is said to have been brought to ruin by his minister who had learnt the secrets from a Śuka bird. The Kathāsarit-sāgara<sup>7</sup> refers to a king Devasena of Śrāvastī. The Daśakumara-charita<sup>8</sup> refers to another king Dharmavardhana of Śrāvastī who had a daughter named Navamālikā.

<sup>1</sup> *Papañchasūdanī*, I, pp. 59-60 : *Sāvattthī ti Savattthassa isano nivrāsathānabhūtā nagarī, yathā Kākandī, Mākandī ti, (Tikkā : Kākandī—Mākandī—Kosambī ti). Evam tāva akkharacintakā.*

Cf. *Paramatthajotikā* (*Suttanipāṭa Commentary*), p. 300 : *Sāvattthiyū ti evam nāmako nagare, Tam kira Savattthassa nāme isāno nivrāsathānāṃ ahosi tasmā yathā Kosambassanvāso Kosambī Kāṇḍalassa Kākandī evam itthilingavassena Sāvattthī ti vuccethi.*

*Dhammapāṭi* in his *Udāna Commentary* (Siamese Ed.), p. 70, notes to the same effect : *Sāvattthiyū ti evam nāmako nagare, Tam hi Savattthassa nāma isano nivrāsathāne nāpātittā Sāvattthī ti vuccethi, yathā Kākandī—Mākandī ti. Evam tāva akkharacintakā.*

<sup>2</sup> *Vāyu P.*, ch. 88, 24-26 ; also *Viṣṇu P.*, IV, 2, 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Matsya P.*, XII, 29-30 ; *Brahma P.*, VII, 53.

<sup>4</sup> *Bhāgavata P.*, IX, 6, 20-21.

<sup>5</sup> *Mahābhārata*, Vanaparva :

*Viśvagaśvāḥ prthoḥ putras-tasmād-Ādras-ca yajñivān  
Ādrāt-tu Yuvanāśvas-tu Śrāvastasyātma-jōbhavat "  
Tasya Śrāvastako jñeyah Śrāvastī yena nirmmitā  
Śrāvastasya tu dāyādo Brihadaśro mahābalah* (201, 3-4).

*Harivamśa* :

*Viśtarāśvāḥ prthoḥ putras-tasmād-Ādras-te-ajñyuta  
Ādrasya Yuvanāśvas-tu Śrāvastasya tu c-ātma-jah  
Yajñe Śrāvastako rājā Śrāvastī yena nirmmitā "  
Śrāvastasya tu dāyādo Brihadaśro mahāyashah* (XI, 21, 22).

<sup>6</sup> Kane's Edn., p. 50.

<sup>7</sup> 15, 63-79.

<sup>8</sup> The legend of Pramati, Chap. V.

There were two Śrāvastis and two Kośalas. The two Śrāvastis were Śrāvastī proper and Vanaśrāvastī<sup>1</sup> (*Vanasāvattihī*); and the two Kośalas were distinguished as *Uttarakośala* or Kośala proper and *Dakṣiṇakośala* or *Mahākośala* which formed a south-western division of the kingdom of Kāliṅga.

The Vāyu Purāṇa<sup>2</sup> and the Uttarakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa<sup>3</sup> speak of the two Kośalas, and mention Śrāvastī as the capital of North Kośala and Kuśāvati as the capital of South Kośala. The two Kośalas are said to have been once under the suzerainty of one and the same king, the Epic hero Rāma, who had installed his son Kuśa in South Kośala with its capital Kuśāvati at the foot of the Vindhyas and his son Lava in North Kośala with Śrāvastī as its capital. This is, of course, to be treated as a later legend invented by fancy to account for the identity of the names of two separate kingdoms.

Sāvattihī figures throughout Buddhist literature as the capital of the kingdom of Kośala, and Sāvattihī and Vanasāvattihī (earlier name, Vana or Tum-bavana)<sup>4</sup> find mention as two important stopping places on the High Road

<sup>1</sup> To Dr. Radhagovinda Basak is due the credit for reference to a śloka in the Matsya as well as the Kūrmapurāṇa (E. I., XIII, p. 290) which clearly speaks of a great city built in Gauḍa under the name and designation of Śrāvastī (*nīrmitā yena Śrāvastī Gauḍadeśe mahāpurī*). Dr. Basak relying partly on this presumptive collateral evidence inclined to think that Śrāvastī mentioned in the Silimpur grant of Dharmapāla might be later Śrāvastī in Gauḍa. In this grant Tarkkāri, a highly noted Brahmin village, is located in Śrāvastī (*Tarkkāriyākyayā śrāvastī-pratibuddham-asti*). Another grant of Dharmapāla contains a reference to another Brahmin village Kroḍaṇja (mis-read Krosañja) in Śrāvastī (*grāmaḥ Kroḍaṇja nāmāsti Śrāvastīyām*). The earlier Piākrit form of the name is met with in the grant of Indrapāla (*Sāvastīyām-asti Vai-nāmā grāmo*; vide *Kāmurūpaśāsanāvalī* by Padmanath Bhattacharyya). Paṇḍit Padmanath, too, inclines at last to think that Śrāvastī was a locality in Gauḍa or Puṇḍravardhana (Journal of the Assam Research Society, Vol. II, No. 3, pp. 82-84). In connection with the Baudh plates of Raṇabhaṇḍadeva of the year 58, edited for the Indian Historical Quarterly (Vol. X, No. 3), Mr. Adris Banerji points out that in one of the plates *Takīri* (evidently the same Brahmin village, as *Tarkkāri*) is placed in Śrāvastīdeśa, while in a few other plates, it is placed in Madhyadeśa. Mr. Banerji has convincingly shown that, according to the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 21), Madhyadeśa included Puṇḍravardhana in its eastern limit (*pūrveṇopālī Puṇḍravardhanam nāma nagaram*). Mr. Jogendra Chandra Ghosh has recently published in the *Sāhitya-Parishat-Patrikā*, 134, B.S., No. 2, pp. 32-33, a comprehensive list of inscriptions referring to Śrāvastī as Śrāvastī, Sāvathi, Sāvāthi, Śrāvastī-maṇḍala, Śrāvastībhukti, or Śrāvastī-vishaya, together with the suggestion that it was no other than a distinct locality somewhere in Northern Bengal (*Uttaravanga*). Until a place-name corresponding with Śrāvastī or Sāvathi is discovered, the existence of a later Śrāvastī in Gauḍa or Puṇḍravardhana is likely to remain a subject of controversy. Here attention might be drawn to the following facts that have so far escaped notice:—

- (1) that in the Si-yu-ki of Hsien Tsang the kingdom of Kośala is described as the Kingdom of Śrāvastī;
- (2) that in the *Divyāvadāna* which is a fairly late work as compared with the Pāli Canon, the city of Śrāvastī is located in Madhyadeśa; and
- (3) that in the same work (p. 402), Puṇḍravardhana is mentioned as the residence of Sumāgadadhā, daughter of Anāthapindika, who was a citizen of Śrāvastī of Buddhist fame.

<sup>2</sup> *Vāyu P.* 88, 209.

<sup>3</sup> *Rāmāyaṇa, Uttarakāṇḍa*:

*Kośaleshu Kuśam Vīram-uttareṣu Lavam tathā |*

*Abhishichya mahātmanā v-bhau Rāmaḥ Kuśilavau ||* (120, 17).

*Kuśasya nagarī ramyā Vindhyaparbbatā-rodhasi |*

*Kuśāvati nāmā sā kritā Rāmena dhīmatā ||* (121, 4).

*Śrāvastī purī ramyā śrāvītā cha Lavasya cha |*

*Ayodhyām vijānam kṛtvā Rāghavo Bharatas-tathā ||* (121, 5).

<sup>4</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta, Pārāyana-vagga, Vatthugāthā*, V. 36, simply calls it Vana (*Vanasavhayam*), while the commentary (*Paramatthajotikā*, Vol. II, p. 583) observes: *Vanasavhayam ti Tumbarananagaram vuchchati, Vanasāvattihī ti eke*. Tumbavana is identified with Tumain in Gwalior State.

starting from Rājagaha, the capital of Magadha, and extending as far south-west as the twin kingdoms of Alaka (Mūlaka) and Assaka, situated opposite each other on the two banks of the Godāvarī in the Deccan (*Dakkhiṇāpatha*). Sāvattthī was really the meeting place of three trade-routes, one of these lay to the south-west from Sāvattthī, with its destination, the countries Alaka (Mūlaka) and Assaka<sup>1</sup> via Sāketa, Kosambī, Vana, Vedisā, Gonaddha,<sup>2</sup> Ujjenī, Māhissatī and Patitthana (Paithan) on the Godāvarī. Another trade-route led to the south-east from Sāvattthī ultimately reaching Rājagaha (Magadha-pura) via Setavya (variant Sotāvī), Kapilavatthu, Kusinārā, Pāvā, Bhoganagara and Vesālī.<sup>3</sup> The third proceeded to the north-west from Sāvattthī towards Gandhāra or Takkasīlā in Uttarāpatha via Mathurā and across the desert of Rājputana: the Chulānidessa giving a list of the places through which the north-western route passed.<sup>4</sup> Mahākātyāyana seems to have followed the same route while coming from the Sindhudeśa to Śrāvastī in the Madhyadeśa (*Dīvyāvadāna*, p. 581). From the account of Buddha's last journey from Rājagaha to Kuśmārā in the Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta, it is clear that Nālandā, Pāṭaligāma (later, Pāṭaliputta), Koṭigāma and Chāpāla (Pāvāla)-Chetiya<sup>5</sup> were the intermediate stopping places between Rājagaha and Vesālī and Bhaṇḍagāma and Hatthigāma were the intermediate stopping places between Vesālī and Pāvā. The position of Bhoganagara mentioned in the Sutta-Nipāta remains uncertain, if it is not either treated as a description of Pāvā or identified with Bhaṇḍagāma. The High Road must have led the traveller to Pāsāṇaka-chetiya by a route which probably extended to Gayā and Uruvela, and ultimately so far as to meet "another route from the coast, possibly at Tāmraliptī, to Benares".<sup>6</sup> There must have been another high road by which one could travel from Sāvattthī to Benares via Kīṭāgiri,<sup>7</sup> and from Kīṭāgiri to Āḷavi (Ardhamāgadhī, Āḷabhi), from Āḷavi to Rājagaha.<sup>8</sup> It is evident from the Jaina description of Mahāvīra's wanderings in the Uvāsaga-dasao that Bārānasi, Kampillapura, Palāsapura, and Āḷabhi were all important towns within the kingdom of King Jiyasattu<sup>9</sup> who is no other than king Pasenadi, Pasenaji or Prasenajit of Kosala. All these places could be reached from Sāvattthī by convenient roads. Sāketa was a highly important city in the kingdom of Kosala from which one might travel to Kosambī across the Yamunā. Sāketa could be reached from Sāvattthī by a chariot drive with

<sup>1</sup> The *Sutta-Nipāta* reading Alakassa Patitthānaṃ (*Pārāyanavagga*, Vattugāthā, 36) led Rhys Davids to suggest Patitthāna as the terminus station (*Buddhist India*, p. 103). But some of the manuscripts have rightly, Alakassaka-Patitthānaṃ, a reading which tallies with the explanation in the commentary (p. 581) which speaks of Assaka and Alaka (Mūlaka) as two Andhra principalities apart from Patitthāna.

<sup>2</sup> According to the *Sutta-Nipāta Commentary* (p. 583), Gonaddha was otherwise called Godhapura.

<sup>3</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, *Pārāyanavagga*, VV. 36-38. See also the commentary; *Buddhist India*, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> f. *Apānaka-Jātaka* (Fausb. No. 1) and *Vannupatha-Jātaka* (F. No. 2); B. C. Law's *Buddhist Conception of Spirits*, p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> For the spelling Pāvāla, see Barua's note, *Indian Culture*, Vol. I, No. I, p. 125.

<sup>6</sup> *Buddhist India*, p. 103. For details of the road from Gayā to Benares, see Barua's Gayā and Buddha-Gayā, I, p. 114.

<sup>7</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I, p. 473; *Kīṭāgiri nāma Kāsinaṃ nigamo*.

<sup>8</sup> *Vinaya-Chullavagga*, pp. 170-2, 175.

<sup>9</sup> *Uvāsaga-dasao*, pp. 84-85, 90, 95, 105, 160, 163.

seven relays of the best of steeds (*satta rathavinītāni*).<sup>1</sup> Just as towards the south-west Sāketa was a town on the borderland of Kosala, opposite Kosambī, the capital of the kingdom of Vatsa, so also towards the north-east was the Kosala town Naṅgara or Naṅgaraka, just opposite and adjoining the Sakya town Uḷumpa or Medaḷumpa.<sup>2</sup> Besides Sāketa and Naṅgaraka, one may take note of Ujuññā (Uruññā. Udaññā) as another town in Kosala which is said to have been visited by King Pasenadi Kosala. But Setavya was not only an important halting station on the high road connecting Sāvattthī with Kapilavatthu but also an important town in Kosala, the official head-quarters of a royal chieftain named Pāyāsī (Jaina Pāesi).<sup>3</sup>

The Vatthupamasutta of the Majjhima-Nikāya mentions the Bāhukā (Mbh. Bāhudā), the Adhikakkā, the Gayā, the Sundarikā, the Sarasvatī, the Payāga and the Bahumatī as the seven sacred rivers of ancient India, in the waters of which people from all quarters bathed to wash away their sins.<sup>4</sup> Amongst them, the Sundarikā was undoubtedly a river in Kosala<sup>5</sup> not far from Sāvattthī. Payāga (evidently representing the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā) must have determined the boundary of Kosala, if not actually included within this kingdom.

The Vinaya-Chullavagga sets forth a list of five sacred rivers, viz., Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Achiravatī, Sarabhū and Mahī, all flowing ultimately into the great sea.<sup>6</sup> Buddhaghosa adds Sarassatī and Mahānadī to the earlier list of five.<sup>7</sup> Amongst these holy streams, the position of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in relation to the kingdom of Kosala has been indicated above in connexion with the river Payāga. The Sarabhū, identified with the Sarayū of the Rāmāyaṇa, is the river on the bank of which was situated Ayodhyā, the first known capital of Kosala.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the downflowing Achiravatī was a famous river in Kosala<sup>9</sup>—the river with which we are vitally concerned.

The city of Śrāvastī was situated on the bank of the Achiravatī which nourished wheat fields on its banks.<sup>10</sup> If Sāheṭh-Māheṭh on the south bank of the Rāpti be the modern site of Śrāvastī, it is positive that the Achiravatī of Buddhist fame is no other than the modern Rapti. It is interesting to note that the

<sup>1</sup> *Majjhima-Nikaya*, I, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 119; *Buddhasāhi-Jātaka* (Fausboll No. 465); *Dhammapada-commentary*, Vol. I, p. 356.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, II, p. 316. Cf. Jaina Rāya-pasenī.

<sup>4</sup> *Majjhima-Nikaya*, I, p. 39:

“Bāhukam Adhikakkāṃ cha Gayam Sundarikāṃ api,  
Sarassatim Payāgaṃ ca atho Bāhumatim nadīm  
Naccam pi bala paṭikkhanto kaṇṭhakamma na s’jjhatī”.

<sup>5</sup> *Sutta-Nipīṭa*, p. 79: *Kosalesu viharati Sundarikāya nadiyā tire*.

<sup>6</sup> *Vinaya-Chullavagga*, p. 239.

<sup>7</sup> *Visuddhimagga*, I, p. 10:

“Na Gaṅgā. Yamunā chāpi, Sarabhū vā Sarasvatī.  
ninnagā vā ‘chiravatī Mahī vā pi mahānadī’  
Sakkuṇanti visodhetum tam malam idha pūṇinam”.

<sup>8</sup> Raychaudhuri's *Political History of Ancient India*, 2nd Edn., p. 47.

<sup>9</sup> *Vinaya-Mahāvagga*, pp. 190-1, 293; *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 511.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 191, 293; *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 511: *Achiravatīnadiṭṭe ‘yavam vapissāmi’ ti khetam kasati*.



author of the *Daśakumāracharita* also knew that the city of Śrāvastī was situated on a river. This river seems presumably to have been the Achiravatī or Rāpti, though our author does not unfortunately name the river.<sup>1</sup>

Adjoining the city and to the south of it was the garden of Prince Jeta, son of King Pasenadi Kosala. It is this garden of Jeta which was purchased by the banker Anāthapiṇḍika or Anāthapiṇḍada and converted into a Buddhist monastic establishment, traditionally known as 'Anāthapiṇḍika's *ārāma* in the garden of Jeta' (*Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme*). When subsequently the Buddhist lady Visākhā, worthy daughter-in-law of the banker Migāra of Sāvattī, constructed a new monastic establishment nearby, presumably at a short distance from and to the north-east of Jetavana, the two establishments became distinguished from each other as Dakkhiṇārāma and Pubbārāma. The earlier Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien definitely places the Jetavana monastery to the south of Śrāvastī when he says: "Leaving the city by the south gate and proceeding 1,200 paces on the road, on the west side of it is the place where the Lord Sudatta (*i.e.*, Anāthapiṇḍika) built a Vihāra".<sup>2</sup> He locates the Pubbārāma built by Visākhā six or seven *li* (*i.e.*, a little more than a mile) to the north-east of the Jetavana vihāra.<sup>3</sup> Hiuen Tsang, too, locates the Jetavana to the south of the city at a distance of five or six *li* (*i.e.*, about a mile).<sup>4</sup>

The expression '*Sāvattīyā Jetavanassa ca antare Achiravatinadītīre*', occurring in the Sutta-nipāta commentary is somewhat misleading as a description of the position of the river Achiravatī in respect of the city of Sāvattī and the Jetavana monastery. It must not be interpreted as signifying that the river flowed between the city and the monastery, but simply that it flowed down at a small distance from both. The *Vinaya* description (*āhāragga*, p. 293) clearly brings out that the river was so situated in relation to both the city and the monastery that the inhabitants of both walked to the river to bathe at the same place and on the same side.<sup>5</sup> According to Fa-Hien, the Jetavana monastery opened towards the east which may be taken to suggest that it was built facing the river. If this surmise be correct, the Achiravatī lay to the east of both the city and the monastery precisely as the modern Rapti lies to the east of Sāhet-Māhet. Going by this location, we are to understand that the Pubbārāma was built close to the southern bank of the Achiravatī.

The Jetavana and the Pubbārāma were the two well-known Buddhist monastic establishments and influential centres of Buddhism built in the life time of Buddha adjoining and to the south of the city of Śrāvastī. In the neighbourhood apparently of the same city was the settlement (*sannivesa*) called Śaravana which was the birth-place of Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta, the great Master of the

<sup>1</sup> Weber, *Ueber das Daśakumāra Charitam in Indische Streifen*, Berlin, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. I, p. xlv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. xlv.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Idha (Sāvattīyaṃ Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme) bhikkhuniyo Achiravatiyā nadiyā vesiyāpi saddhim naggā ekatithe nahāyanti.*

Ājīvikas.<sup>1</sup> The city was indeed the chief seat of the Ājīvikas who found their shelter in the potter-shop of Hālāhalā, a lay disciple of theirs.<sup>2</sup> Polāsapura was another important centre of the Ājīvikas.<sup>3</sup> In the same city was the sacred site of Koṭṭhaka-Chetiya which became an early seat of Jainism founded by Mahāvīra.<sup>4</sup> Other notable centres of Jainism in Kosala are said to have been the Koṭṭhaka-chetiya in the town of Benares, the Saṅkhavana in the town of Ālabhī, the Sahassambavana in the town of Kampillapura and the Sahassambavana in the town of Polāsapura.<sup>5</sup>

Śrāvastī was also an important and powerful seat of Brahmanism and Vedic learning, as it had an important Brahmanical institution under the headship of Jāṇussoṇi (*Jānasrutī*)<sup>6</sup>. Other seats of learning in the vicinity were Tudīgāmo, under the headship of Todeyya<sup>7</sup>; Opasāda, with an institution presided over by Chankī,<sup>8</sup> Ichchhānaṅkala or Ichchhānaṅgala, with an establishment under the control of Tārukkha,<sup>9</sup> Ukkatṭha or Okkatṭhā, under Pokkharasādi<sup>10</sup> (Pushkarasāti) and Sālāvātī, the seat of the institution of Lohicheha (Lauhitya)<sup>11</sup>. Manasākaṭa was also a notable centre of Brahmanism in Kosala.<sup>12</sup>

## II. KOŚALA AND ŚRĀVASTĪ

The prosperity of Śrāvastī is, after all, the prosperity of the kingdom of Kosala. This kingdom figured prominently among the four powerful monarchies of Northern India and its prosperity reached its zenith in Buddha's time. The history of this kingdom before the Master's advent is merely the story of its formation and steady rise through a prolonged struggle with its neighbours for supremacy, while that after the demise of Buddha reduces itself to a narrative of its decline and pathetic sinking into insignificance. Its last powerful king is referred to in Jaina literature with the exalted epithet *Jitaśatru* (vanquisher of the enemy, the conqueror), and in Buddhist tradition as Pasenadi Kosala (*Prasenajit Kauśalya*); Prasenajit, a name also met with in the Purāṇas, being

<sup>1</sup> *Uvāsagadasāo* (Eng. Tr.) by Hocnle, App. I, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, App. I, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Chs. IV-VII.

<sup>6</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, I, p. 235; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, p. 399; *Jāṇussoṇi Sāvātthivāsiko*; *Majjhima-Nikāya* I, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 235; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, p. 399; *Todeyya Tudīgāma-vāsiko*; *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, p. 196, III, p. 202; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, p. 384; *Sāvātthiyā aridūre Tudīgāmo*.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 235; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, p. 399; *Chankī Opasāda vāsiko*; *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, p. 164; *Opasādam nāmo Kosalānam Brāhmaṇo gāmo*.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 235; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, p. 399; *Tārukkho ichchhānaṅgala vāsiko-Suttanipāta*, p. 115; *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 462.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 235; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, I, p. 244, II, p. 399; *Pokkharasāti Ukkatṭha-vāsiko—Sutta nipāta*, p. 115; *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 462.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 224.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 235; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, p. 399.

in effect the same as the Jaina epithet Jitaśatru.<sup>1</sup> The Kathāsarit-sāgara also refers to King Prasenajit of Śrāvastī who is said to have been born in the lineage of the grandmothers, Ambā and Ambālikā of the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas (30, 23-25; 33, 133).

The Pāli *Kosala-Samyutta* speaks of five rulers headed by Pasenadi going together to *Pubbārāma* for an interview with Buddha.<sup>2</sup> They were all contemporaries and all evidently belonged to the kingdom of Kosala, in which case we have no other alternative but to think that four of them were subordinate rulers under Pasenadi.

Neither the text nor the commentary enlightens us as to who those four sub-kings were. It is certain that Kāśī with Bārāṇasī as its chief town became annexed to Kośala so as to enable Pasenadi to ponder over his kingdom in terms of Kāśī and Kosala (*Piṇḍa me Kāśī-Kosalā*).<sup>3</sup> The *Vinaya-Mahāvagga* alludes to Kāsika-rājā (ruler of Kāśī) who consulted Jīvaka<sup>4</sup>, the royal physician to Bimbisāra<sup>5</sup>, the king of Magadha, as well as to his son and successor Ajātasattu<sup>6</sup>. It is conclusive from this reference that Kāsika-rājā, as a contemporary of Jīvaka, Bimbisāra and Ajātasattu, was no other than a sub-ruler under Pasenadi who was a rival and contemporary of both Bimbisāra and Ajātasattu. If Kāśī was one of the four dependencies of Kosala, what were the remaining three dependencies? It may, perhaps, be safely assumed from the Jaina list, in the *Uvāsagadasāo*, of five cities, in the dominions of Jitaśatru that each one of them was nothing but the principal town of each of the five components of the kingdom, Sāvattihī of Kosala proper, Bārāṇasī of Kāśī, Ālabhī of Ālabhī, Kampillapura of Uttara-Paṇchāla<sup>7</sup> and Polāsapura of similar integral part.

<sup>1</sup> Hoernle in his note (*Uvāsagadasāo*, Translation, p. 6), observes: "In the *Sūryaprajñapti* Jiyasattu is mentioned as ruling over Mithilā, the capital of the Videha country (see *Bhagavatī-Sūtra*, p. 244). Here (*Uvāsagadasāo* Lec. I) he is mentioned as ruling over Vāṇiyagāma or Vesālī. On the other hand, Cheḍaga, the maternal uncle of Mahāvīra, is said to have been king of Vesālī and of Videha . . . It would seem that Jiyasattu and Cheḍaga were the same persons. The name Jiyasattu (Skt. Jitashatru) he may have received, as has been suggested (*Bhagavatī Sūtra*, p. 244, Ind. St. Vol. XVI, p. 316), by way of rivalry with Ajātasattu (Skt. Ajātaśatru) king of Magadha". Raychaudhuri (*Political History*, 3rd Edn., p. 133) takes the *Uvāsagadasāo* references to Jiyasattu to propound a theory of his own: "Jiyasattu seems to have been a common designation of kings . . . The name is given also to the rulers of Sāvattihī, Kampillā, Mithilā, Champā, Vāṇiyagāma, Bārāṇasī and Polāsapura". That Jiyasattu was not a common epithet applied to all rulers but a special epithet applied only to one ruler is evident from the *Uvāsagadasāo*, Lecture VIII, where the ruler of Rājagṛīha, i.e., of the kingdom of Magadha, is said to have been *Senie rāyā*, corresponding to Pali *rājā Seniya* Bimbisāro, and *Ibid.*, Lec. I, where king Jiyasattu has been distinguished from *rāyā Kunie* (=Kunika-Ajātasattu of Magadha, son and successor of Seniya Bimbisāra). It is impossible to think that in Buddha's time either Cheḍaga, the king of Videha and Vesālī was also the ruler of Kāśī and Kośala, or Jiyasattu, the king of Kāśī and Kosala, was also the ruler of Videha and Vesālī. The Jaina references are loose in the face of them, and their significance, if there be any, can only be sought for in the existence of an alliance of the king of Kāśī-Kośala with the eighteen *gaṇarājās*, the nine Licchavis and the nine Mallakis, and also perhaps with the royal power of Anga against Kunika-Ajātasattu of Magadha pursuing an aggressive policy.

<sup>2</sup> *Samyutta-nikāya*, I, p. 80: *Attha kho te pañcharājāso Pasenadi-pamakkhā yena Bhagavā tenupasankumimsu*. Raychaudhuri (*Political History*, 3rd Edn., p. 133) simply quotes this reference in translation without attempting any explanation: "five rājās, Pasenadi being the chief among them". Here the total *pañcha* (five), including Pasenadi Kosala as the chief, is significant as determining the number of sub-rulers under the king of Kosala.

<sup>3</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, p. III.

<sup>4</sup> *Vinaya-Mahāvagga*, p. 281.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276.

<sup>6</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, I, p. 47.

<sup>7</sup> Kampillapura is undoubtedly the same name as Kampillanagara which is mentioned in the *Kumbhakāra Jātaka* (F. No. 408) as the capital of *Uttara-Paṇchāla ruttā*. See Raychaudhuri's *Political Hist. of Ancient India*, 3rd Ed., p. 49.

Viewed in this light, it is easy to point out that the kingdom of Kosala was then bounded in Buddha's time on the east by the Gaṅgā and the kingdom of Magadha, on the north-east by the territories of the Vṛjī-Lichchhavis and those of the Mallas, on the north by the territories of the Śākya, on the west by Sūrasena annexed to the kingdom of Avantī and on the south and south-west by the kingdom of Vatsa with Kosambī as its capital. It was divided from Videha, one of the Vṛjī-Lichchhavi territories, by the river Sadānīrā, doubtfully identified by Cunningham with Gaṇḍakī and wrongly by Pargiter with Rāptī.<sup>1</sup> An extensive kingdom like this cannot certainly be covered by the modern districts of Oudh as suggested by Ray Chaudhuri<sup>2</sup>. From the Jaina reference in the Kalpasūtra and the Nirayāvalī to the existence of a powerful alliance among the nine Lichchhavis, the nine Mallakis and the rulers of Kāśi-Kośala,<sup>3</sup>—an entente of three powers, Vṛjī, Malla and Kosala, it may be inferred that the kingdom of Kosala was coterminous on the north-east with the Vṛjī and Malla territories put together.<sup>4</sup>

It is then in this maximum extension that the kingdom of Kosala occupied in Buddha's time almost the whole of the western half of the middle country as defined in Buddhist literature,<sup>5</sup> excluding in the north Kapilavatthu and Devadaha, the territories of the Śākya and the Koliyas as well as the land of the Kurus.<sup>6</sup> It excluded in the south and south-west the kingdom of Vatsa. It is within these extended limits that it then flourished with its four dependencies, Kāśi, Ālabhī and the rest forming its fringes.

The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki is purely a Kosalan epic praising in eloquent terms the kingdom and its inhabitants, the king and his sons and courtiers, the royal family and its high-souled chaplains, the city of Ayodhyā and its magnificence, and no less the river Sarayū and its sanctity.

The Pali Jātaka Commentary, on the other hand, is a classic to extol the past glories of the kingdom of Kāśi under the rule of the kings of the Brahmadatta dynasty, and only a few of its episodes narrate the sad story of its fall as a result of its repeated struggle with the neighbouring kingdom of Kosala. But barring the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, three-fourth of the extant Pāli canon stands out as Kosalan literature, mostly associated with Śrāvastī and its neighbourhood. The whole of the *Kosala-Samyutta* (*Samyutta-Nikāya*, Pt. I, for instance, is made up of highly informative and instructive dialogues between Buddha and King Pasenadi of Kosala. The latter half of the *Rājavagga*<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Raychaudhuri (*Political Hist. of Ancient India*, 3rd Ed.), p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Raychaudhuri (*Ibid.*, p. 87) is misled by Jacobi's translation in speaking of "the nine Lichchhavis as having formed a confederacy with nine Mallakis and eighteen Gaṇarājas of Kāśi-Kosala". We accept here Dr. Barua's interpretation which takes the expression 'eighteen gaṇarājas' as a totalling of the nine Lichchhavis and the nine Mallakis, Buddhaghosha (*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, II, pp. 516-517) expressly referring to the Vajjis as Gaṇarājas.

<sup>4</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, p. 101: "Pasenadiṃ Kosalam Bhagavā etad avoca: Kim nu te, Mahārāja, rājā Māgadho Senīyo Bimbisāro kupito, Vesālīkā vā Lichchhavi, aññe vā paṭirājāno ti", which conclusively proves that the kingdom of Kosala excluded the territories of the Lichchhavis of Vesālī.

<sup>5</sup> *Vinaya-Mahāvagga*, p. 197. See for the varying denotation of the geographical term Madhyadeśa (*Majjhima janapada*), Ray Chaudhuri's *Political History*, pp. 40, 44, 75, etc.

<sup>6</sup> See *Dīgha-Nikāya*, II, pp. 55 and 290.

<sup>7</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, pp. 97-133.

containing such *suttas* as the *Āṅgulinimāla*, the *Piyajātika*, the *Bāhitika*, the *Dhammachetiya* and the *Kaṇṇakatthala*, is in the same category. The same king Pasenadi and his generals figure prominently in such later legends as those in the *Bhaddasāla-Jātaka* (F. No. 465), the *Viḍḍabha-vatthu* (*Dhp. Com.*), the *Virūḍhakāvadāna* (*Avadānakalpalatā*), and the *Prātihāryāvadāna* (*Divyāvadāna*).

The *Pārāyaṇavagga* with the *Vatthugāthā*, as contained in the *Chullaniddesa* and the *Sutta-Nipāta*, belonging to the earliest known stratum of the Pāli canon, must be regarded as a remarkable Kosalan anthology. It vividly preserves the cultural tradition of Bāvari and his sixteen disciples, each of them figuring as interlocutors in each of the sixteen poems of which the book is composed. Bāvari was the highly venerated hereditary chaplain to King Pasenadi as well as to his father. He was well versed in Vedic literature. He led the life of a sage and hermit and lived in a hermitage with sixteen thousand resident pupils divided into sixteen groups of one thousand each, each group having been placed under one of the sixteen chief disciples.<sup>1</sup> His hermitage was built in the kingdom of Assaka and in the neighbourhood of the kingdom of Muḷaka or Aḷaka, on the bank of the Godāvarī<sup>2</sup> just at the point where the river was divided into two streams and where in the days of yore Śarabhaṅga and other holy sages lived.<sup>3</sup> He walked south to the Deccan from Sāvattī, 'the magnificent capital of Kosala'.<sup>4</sup> The *Sarabhaṅga Jātaka* (F. No. 525) refers to an earlier age when one desiring to travel from Benares to the hermitage of Śarabhaṅga on the Godāvarī had to travel by a foot-track (*ekapadimaggā*) under the guidance of a forester (*vanacharaka*). The *Araṇyakāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, referring as it does, to the very same age, speaks of Rāma as walking south from Ayodhyā to Pañchavaṭī on the Godāvarī, from *āśrama* to *āśrama*, the hermitage of Śarabhaṅga being mentioned as a halting place not far from Pañchavaṭī. Already at the time of the rise of Buddhism there grew up a high road and spacious trade-route by which Bāvari was able to walk down from the Kosalan capital and his disciples could walk up as far as Sāvattī and from Sāvattī to Rājagaha halting at the stopping places mentioned before.

Some of the Pāli canonical texts speak of a number of pre-eminent Brahmins of Kosala who were 'old, aged, elderly and advanced in years'.<sup>5</sup> They are called *Mahāsālas*, a term which is explained by the scholiasts as meaning 'rich and influential', 'mahāsāla' being treated as equivalent of 'mahāsāra', 'a man of substance'.<sup>6</sup> This is just one aspect of their position. The *Mahāgoriṇḍa-Suttanta* refers to a *mahāsālā* as a Vedic institution for educating the *mahātakas*

<sup>1</sup> *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 580: *āchariyo Pasenadino putu purohitassa putto jāto nāmena Bāvari ti, etc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, p. 190: *So Assakassa visaye, Muḷakassa samāsane vasi Godāvarīkūle uñchena cha phaleṇa cha.*

<sup>3</sup> *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 581.

<sup>4</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, p. 190: *Kosalānam purā ramā agamā Dakkhiṇāpatham.*

<sup>5</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, *Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta*: *Sambhulā Kosulakā brāhmaṇamahāsālā jipṇā vuddhā mahallakā adbhagatā vayo anuppatā.*

<sup>6</sup> *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 313: *Mahāsaratūya mahāsālā, yesam kira nidahitvā thapitum yeva asūtikoti-samkham dhanam atthi.*

(*snātakas* or advanced students).<sup>1</sup> Accordingly the significance of the epithet *mahāsālā* is that they were not only rich and influential but distinguished heads of Vedic institutions founded in different localities, such as Sāvattihī, Tudigāmo, Ichchhānāṅkala, Ukkatthā, Opasāda, Sālāvati and Manasākāṭa already mentioned. The texts do not keep us in the dark as to how they became so rich and influential. With respect to each of the above localities where the institutions were founded and maintained, each of the heads is represented as dwelling in a place teeming with life, with much grassland, woodland and cornfields around, on a royal domain, the gift of King Pasenadi of Kosala with as much power over it as the king<sup>2</sup> himself.

This description is important as explaining how these great Brahmins of Kośala became rich and powerful because of certain permanent land grants and endowments made by Pasenadi. The Pāli stock list of eminent Kosalan Brahmin *mahāsālas* includes such names as Chaṅki, Tārukkha, Pokkharasāti, Jānussoṇi, Todeyya and Lohichcha,<sup>3</sup> each one of whom was established in a distinct locality with such control over it as regards the revenue and the judicial and civil administration of its affairs as was determined by the terms of royal grants and religious endowments (*raññā dinnam Brahmadeyyam*).<sup>4</sup> Chaṅki was established in Opasāda, Tārukkha in Ichchhānāṅkala, Pokkharasāti (rather Pokkharasāti Opamañña or Pushkarasāti Upamannyu) in Ukkatthā, Jānussoṇi (Jānaśruti) in Sāvattihī, Todeyya in Tudigāmo and Lohichcha (*Lauhitya*) in Sālāvati. Each of them is honoured as a distinguished teacher of the age, well-versed in the four Vedas, the *Vedāṅgas*, *Itihāsa* ranking as the fifth Veda (*Itihāsa Pañchamaṁ*) and the sciences useful to the people.<sup>5</sup>

The Pāli tradition of Buddhism also immortalises the names of some of their eminent disciples, such as Ambatthā<sup>6</sup> and Vāseṭṭha<sup>7</sup> of Pokkharasāti, Bhāradvāja of Tārukkha,<sup>8</sup> and Subha of Todeyya,<sup>9</sup> Assalāyana being also counted among the eminent Vedic scholars of the rising generation.<sup>10</sup> One is not to be led away with the idea that the number of pupils and disciples was restricted to one or two. For there is a clear indication in the text as to each of the *mahāsālas* having a large number of resident pupils under him (*mānavakā, antevāsikā*).<sup>11</sup> According to the *Bodhisattvavadāna-kalpalatā* (61.2) a Brahmin of Śrāvastī named Svastika took to cultivation to earn his livelihood. The same source tells us (52.20) that a Brahmin of this city was once fined by a king named Hiraṇyavarman.

<sup>1</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, II, p. 236 : *Satta cha Brāhmaṇa mahā-sāle satta cha mahātakasatāni mante vāchesi. Buddha-ghosha has altogether missed the sense. See Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, pp. 662-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. 87 ; I, p. 224, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, I, pp. 224, 235. *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, II, p. 399.

<sup>4</sup> *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, I, p. 246.

<sup>5</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, I, p. 88 : “*tiṇṇam Vedānam pāragū sanighandū-keṭubhānam sākkharappabhedānam itihāsa-pañchamānam padako veyyākaraṇo lokāyatamahāpurisa-lakkhaṇesu anavayo anuññāta-paṭiññāto sake ācariyake teviṇṇake pāvachane.*” See for explanation, *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, I, pp. 247-48.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, I, pp. 88-89.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. 235 : *Sutta-Nipāta*, p. 117.

<sup>8</sup> p. 235.

<sup>9</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, p. 196, III, p. 202.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, II, p. 147.

<sup>11</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, I, p. 89 ; *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, I, p. 251 : “*Manavakā ti Pokkharasādiss’ eva antevāsikā.*”

The Jānussoṇi-vagga of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* is a Kosalan book named after Jānussoṇi of Sāvattthī. The same eminent Brahmin teacher prominently figures also in the *Bhayabherava-sutta* (*Majjhima-Nikāya*). Similarly, Ambaṭṭha has found prominence in the *Ambaṭṭha-sutta* (*Dīgha*), Vāseṭṭha along with Bhāradvāja in the Suttas called *Tevijja* (*Dīgha*) and *Vāseṭṭha* (*Sutta-Nipāta*). Lohichcha in the *Lohichcha-Sutta* (*Dīgha*), Chaṅki in the *Chaṅki* (*Majjhima*), Subha in the *Subha* (*Majjhima*), Assalāyana in the *Assalāyana* (*Majjhima*), and the rest in such Suttas as the *Ambaṭṭha*, the *Tevijja* and the *Vāseṭṭha*. Among them, three at least, namely, Pokkharasāti (Pushkarasāti), Assalāyana (Aśvalāyana) and Vāseṭṭha (Vāśiṣṭha), gained prominence in the Sūtra literature of the Brahmins.<sup>1</sup> To this list may be added the name of Ghoṭakamukha (Ghoṭamukha) who figures in the *Ghoṭakamukha-Sutta* (*Majjhima*) and is quoted as an authority in the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Kāmasūtra*,<sup>2</sup> that of Sundarika-Bhāradvāja, the *Agnihotrī* Brahmin who lived on the bank of the river Sundarikā (see *Sundarika-Bhāradvāja-Sutta*, *Sutta-Nipāta*), as well as that of Aggika-Bhāradvāja who appears in the *Vasala-Sutta* (*Sutta-Nipāta*).

Six out of ten lectures, of which the Jaina *Uvāsagadasāo* is composed are concerned with places in the kingdom of Kośala and the inhabitants thereof. This holds good also in the case of Uddesa I, Saya XV, of the *Bhagavatī Sūtra*.

Maskari Gosāla, the great leader of the Ājīvikas, was a native of Kośala. The Ājīvika canon, consisting of the eight *mahāvimittas* and two *maggas*,<sup>3</sup> which was distinctly Kosalan literature, is now irrevocably lost.

The kingdom of Kośala could boast not only of Sāvattthī and its neighbourhood as an important and powerful centre of Buddhism but of other places as well, such as Sāketa, Ujuṇṇā, Ālavī, Vāsabhagāma and Kīṭāgiri. The Deer park of Isipatan (Sārṇāth) itself was included in the kingdom of Kośala. Kīṭāgiri, situated within the Kāśī area,<sup>4</sup> was 'a very fertile tract with abundance of rain-water enabling it to yield three harvests of food-grains (every year).'<sup>5</sup> In point of fact, so intimate and enduring was the connection of Kośala with the life and teachings of Buddha that Pasenadi felt himself justified in feelingly saying to him: "*Bhagavā pi Kosalako, aham pi Kosalako*," "The Blessed One is a man of Kosala, as I am."<sup>6</sup>

The Jaina legends in the *Bhagavatī* and *Nirayāvalī* sūtras bring Kuṇika-Ajātaśatru, the son and successor of Bimbisāra, before us as the ruler (or rather the viceroy) of Aṅga. It is probably at this stage that he picked up a quarrel with the Vṛjī-Lichchhavis of Vesālī. The origin of the quarrel has been well pointed out by Buddhaghosha in his *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* bearing on Chapter I of the *Ahāparinibbāna-Suttanta*. There was a mine or quarry on the boundary

<sup>1</sup> Barua's *History of Pre-Buddhist Indian Philosophy*, p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> B. C. Law, *Historical Gleanings*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Uvāsagadasāo* (Eng. Transl.) by Hoernle, Appendix I, p. 4; Rockhill's *Life of the Buddha*, App. I, p. 249, Barua's *Ājīvikas*, I, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I, p. 473.

<sup>5</sup> Barua in *I. H. Q.*, X, p. 63.

<sup>6</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, p. 124. Raychaudhuri (*Political History of Ancient India*, 3rd Ed., p. 70) construes the statement as implying something else which is not at all justified.

of the two territories and the arrangement was that the total output of it should be equally divided between the two powers. But the Vṛjī-Lichchhavis forcibly took away the total output in disregard of the terms of the treaty. A war ensued between Ajātaśatru and the Lichchhavis, and the former must have failed to gain victory over the powerful Vṛjī confederacy. This is anyhow a highly plausible explanation as to why in the very opening paragraph of the *Mahāparinibbāna-Suttanta*, King Ajātaśatru of Magadha is made to appear dramatically as though on a stage, indulging in a soliloquy and expressing his grim determination to exterminate and annihilate the Vṛjīs. The Buddhist narrative presents Ajātaśatru as a full-fledged king of Magadha, undoubtedly after the death of his father Bimbisāra. The Jaina legends above referred to however, indicate that the Lichchhavis of Vesālī tried to set up Vehalla, a son of Bimbisāra, as their own nominee for the throne of Magadha, instead of Kuṇika-Ajātaśatru. The installation of Ajātaśatru on the throne of Magadha, as successor to Bimbisāra was equally disliked by King Pasenadi of Kosala, who forthwith deprived Ajātaśatru of his income from the revenue of Kāśī. To restore his rightful legacy Ajātaśatru invaded Kāśī with his army. A protracted struggle followed and a vivid account of it is contained in the *Kosala-Samyutta*. In the course of this battle, fortune favoured at one time this, at another the other party. Finally Ajātaśatru was defeated and carried as a captive to King Pasenadi. The war was concluded by a treaty of peace, according to which Pasenadi not only released Ajātaśatru but gave him his daughter Vajirā or Vajirī in marriage, granting the revenue of Kāśī as her pin-money. It thus appears most likely that the necessity of opposing Ajātaśatru's succession to the throne of Magadha drove the Lichchhavis, the Mallas and the sovereign power of Kāśī-Kosala into forming a strong alliance among themselves. The supremacy of Pasenadi over Kāśī-Kosala and the glory of Kosala as an independent kingdom were not destined to be of long standing. The downfall of the king forestalled the downfall of the kingdom. The coming events cast their shadows before and this fact has been clearly brought out in the *Piyaṇṇika-Sutta* (*Majjhima-Nikāya*), in a homely conversation between Pasenadi and Mallikādevī, his wise queen. The gist of this conversation is that this last powerful king of Kosala had a foreknowledge of how certain impending calamities awaited all that was dear unto his heart, *e.g.*, his beloved daughter Vajirī, his beloved wife Vāsabhakhattiyā, his beloved general Viḍūḍabha, his beloved queen consort Mallikā, his beloved kingdom of Kāśī-Kosala. The same feeling of despondency on the part of Pasenadi is brought out also in the introductory episode of the *Kālingabodhi-Jātaka* (F. No. 479) where the king having been requested to plant the seed of the Bo-tree near the gate of the Jetavana monastery declined to do so and insisted on having the work done rather by the banker Anāthapiṇḍika, thinking: “*Rajjam nāma na sabbakālaṃ amhākaṃ tiṭṭhati, idaṃ mayā Anāthapiṇḍikena ropāpitum vaṭṭati*” *ti.*, “The sovereignty will not for all times abide with me; I should have it rather planted by Anāthapiṇḍika.” Kosala retained its position as an independent kingdom as long as Pasenadi lived. There is a clear Pāli canonical evidence to prove that Pasenadi was of the same age as Buddha and that both of them lived



up to their eightieth year. In the course of the last interview of Pasenadi with Buddha at Naṅgaraka, so vividly described in the *Dhamma-Chetiya-Sutta* (*Majjhima-Nikāya*) Pasenadi is made to say: *Bhagavā pi āsītiko aham pi āsītiko*, 'the Blessed one is in his eightieth year, so am I.' The episode of this interview has been illustrated in one of the Barhut sculptures, bearing the two labels,—*Rājā Pasenadi Kosala*, *Bhagavato dhamma chakkaṃ*—one referring to the figure of the king of Kosala proceeding in a four-horse chariot to wait on Buddha and the other to the shrine symbolising the presence of the master. The king was accompanied by his general Dīgha-Kārāyana (Dīrgha-Chārāyana). The Pāli Sutta closes with the peaceful departure of the king, and there is not the slightest hint that any calamity befell the king of Kosala thereafter. Later legends, however, continue the narrative and add a sequel to the effect that whilst the king was deeply engaged in conversation with Buddha at Naṅgaraka, his general Dīgha-Kārāyana, who was waiting outside, taking care of the royal insignia of the king, left the place with those insignia and set up prince Viḍūḍabha, a son of Pasenadi by his wife Vāsabha-Khattiyā, on the throne of Kosala, deposing the old king Pasenadi. These legends go further to add that Pasenadi walked towards Rājagaha to seek the help and protection of King Ajātaśatru and died of exhaustion at the city gate, while, on the other hand, Viḍūḍabha, the usurper, took the earliest opportunity of invading Kapilavāstu and exterminating the Śākyaas to feed fat his ancient grudge. The legends fondly narrate how Viḍūḍabha perpetrated a ruthless massacre of the Śākyaas who remained non-violent, carried the Śākya women to his capital and cruelly put them to death when they refused to yield to his embrace. and all that in the very life-time of Buddha.

The authenticity of these later legends has already been doubted by Vincent A. Smith.<sup>1</sup> We may notice that the Pāli canonical texts have altogether a different tale to tell. In them Vāsabha-Khattiyā is nowhere represented as a slave-girl of the Śākya chief Māhānāman, nor as the mother of Viḍūḍabha. In them Viḍūḍabha is everywhere mentioned as a trusted general (*senāpati*), like the other general Dīgha-Kārāyana and nowhere as a son of Pasenadi. The Śākyaas remained an independent power till the demise of Buddha, for they are expressly mentioned in the *Mahāparinibbāna-Suttanta* as one of the rival claimants for a share of the bodily remains or relics of the great master after he had passed away at Kuśinārā. It is very strange, however, that there was no messenger from King Pasenadi or from any person in Kosala to claim a share of the relics. It is likely that certain internecine troubles in Kosala must have prevented the royal power of Kosala from standing as a claimant for the precious bodily remains of the Master. The two generals may have combined to depose the reigning king and seize the throne for Viḍūḍabha. It is also possible that the usurper king conquered the Śākya territories as a first step towards the fulfilment of an ambitious programme of conquest. Anyhow after the demise of Buddha, there must have been desperate struggles for supremacy among the powers of northern India which ultimately led to the fall of the kingdom of Kosala and the emergence of Magadha as a paramount power.

<sup>1</sup> *The Early History of India*, 4th Ed., p. 38.

The ancient Pāli commentators devised a far-fetched and fantastic derivation of the name of *Sāvattthī*: *Sabbam ettha atthīti Sāvattthī*, 'all that here is (in abundance), therefore, it is called the All-abundant,' obviously to magnify the material prosperity of the city. They say, by way of explanation, that all that men needed for their nourishment and enjoyment could be had there in abundance. The passing inquiry as to what things are available at the depôt of goods was readily answered with the reply—"all."<sup>1</sup> The following gāthās, traditionally handed down by them, may well express their estimate of the prosperity of Śrāvastī:—

"*Sabbadā sabbūpakaraṇaṃ Sāvattthiyaṃ samohitaṃ tasmā sabbam upādāya Sāvattthīti pavuchchati. Kosalānaṃ purāṇaṃ rammaṇaṃ dassaneyyaṃ manoramaṇaṃ dasahi saddehi avivittaṃ annapānasamāyutaṃ. Vuḍḍhiṃ vepullaṃ pattaṃ iddhaṃ phūtaṃ manoramaṇaṃ Alakanandā va devānaṃ Sāvattthī-puraṇaṃ uttamaṃ ti.*"<sup>2</sup>

"At all times all commodities were well-stocked in Sāvattthī, hence taken all things together, Sāvattthī is called all-abundant. The principal city of Kosala, charming, worth-seeing, delightful, never ceasing to reverberate with the ten gay sounds, and ever replenished with stores of food and drinks; gaining in development and expansion, flourishing with wealth, teeming with population and pleasing to the mind,—the city of Sāvattthī was like Alakanandā of the gods." The Sanskrit Buddhist texts, such as the *Avadānaśataka* (p. 19) and the *Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalpalatā* (7.50) also refer to the prosperity of Śrāvastī. Merchants of Śrāvastī, we are told, used often to go to Ceylon across the seas.

In the *Mahāparinibbāna-Suttanta* Sāvattthī is mentioned as one of the six examples of principal cities of Northern India, where many wealthy nobles, Brahmins, and traders had strong faith in the Tathāgata, the other five being Champā, Rājagaha, Sāketa, Kosambī and Bārāṇasī<sup>3</sup>. Buddhaghosha gives a traditional idea of the minimum monetary strength determining the status of a person considered wealthy (*mahāsālā*) among the nobles, the Brahmins, and the traders. A noble was considered wealthy if he had hoarded treasures worth one hundred or one thousand crores and in whose house the daily egress and ingress of money took place at the rate of one to two cart-loads of *kahāpaṇas*. A Brahmin was deemed affluent if he had a hoarding of eighty crores and in whose house the daily transactions of money amounted to one *tumba*. Similarly, a trader or banker was considered rich if he had hoarded at least forty crores and in whose house the daily outflow and receipts of money went on at the rate of five *ammaṇas* to one *tumba* of *kahāpaṇas*.<sup>4</sup> King Pasenadi himself was, no doubt, the chief of wealthy noblemen in Buddha's time. Other wealthy nobles among the citizens of Śrāvastī who find mention in Buddhist literature, were Prince Jeta who

<sup>1</sup> *Papañcasūdanī*, I, p. 59: *Yam kiñchi manussānaṃ upabhogaparibhogāṃ sabbam ettha atthī ti Sāvattthī. Sattasamāyoge cha, 'kiñ bhaṇḍam atthī' ti pucchhite sabbam atthī ti vachanamupādāya Sāvattthī.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 59-60.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, II, p. 146: *Santi . . . mahānagarāṇi seyyathidaṃ Champā Rājagahaṃ Sāvattthī Sāketam Kosambī Bārāṇasī. Ettha . . . bahū Khattiya-mahāsālā brāhmaṇa mahāsālā gahapati-mahāsālā Tathāgate abhippasannā.*

<sup>4</sup> *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, II, p. 586.

laid out, owned, and maintained the famous garden bearing his name outside the city,<sup>1</sup> and the generals of Kosala, namely, Senāpati Viḍūḍabha, senāpati Dīgha-Kārāyaṇa, and senāpati Bandhula who according to later legends being assassinated with all his sons by Pasenadi was succeeded by his nephew Dīgha-Kārāyaṇa. The queens must have had their own private estates or hoardings. There was thus a famous garden, near the city bearing the name of Mallikā, the queen of Pasenadi, adorned with a Tiṇḍuka grove.<sup>2</sup> (which according to Buddhaghosha was a row of timbaru trees). It was a flower-and-fruit garden, as well as a park, at first provided with one shed (ēkasālaka) and subsequently with many sheds.<sup>3</sup>

Jānussoṇi was evidently the chief of wealthy Brahmins who resided in the city of Śrāvastī. Aggika-Bhāradvāja was also a Brāhmin resident of this city. Nālajaṅgha<sup>4</sup> and Sañjaya Ākāsagotta<sup>5</sup> were two other influential Brahmins, attached to the royal family of Kosala.

Sudatta, noted in the tradition of Buddhism as Anāthapiṇḍika or Anāthapiṇḍada, and Migāra (Mrigadhara), father-in-law of Viśākhā, were the two rich traders and bankers of Śrāvastī, while Viśākhā's father, the banker Dhanañjaya, lived in Sāketa.<sup>6</sup> Anāthapiṇḍika gained an immortal fame as the donor of the Jetavana monastery and Viśākhā immortalised herself by erecting the Pubbārāma vihāra. Sirivaḍḍha, the Mahāmatta of Kosala, was another leading citizen of Śrāvastī attached to the royal court of Pasenadi.

The material prosperity of Śrāvastī was due to the fact that it was a meeting place of three main trade-routes and a great centre of trade. The Sohgaure copper-plate,<sup>7</sup> containing an order either issued by or issued to the mahāmātras of Śrāvastī (*Sāvatiyanam mahāmātranam sāsane*), stands out as a clear epigraphic record, proving that storehouses were built by the state on public roads at reasonable distances and in suitable localities stocked with loads of ropes and other things useful to the caravans. The plate refers to two such storehouses (*dve koṭhagalāni*), one at Manavasitikāḍa (a name reminding us of Manasākaṭa in the Pāli *Tevijja-sutta*) and Usagāma. The Pāli canonical texts definitely speak of Śrāvastī as the capital of Kosala (*Kosalānam purā*)<sup>8</sup> but nowhere give a full description of the city. According to the *Lalitavistara* also, the most important capital city of Kosala was Śrāvastī which was full of kings, princes, ministers, councillors and their followers, Ksatriyas, Brāhmaṇas and householders, etc. (*Lalitavistara*, Chapter I). In the commentaries of Buddhaghosha, Śrāvastī is described as the

<sup>1</sup> *Papañcasūdanā*, I, p. 60: *Jatass' ranam Jetavanam. Tamhi Jetana rājakumārena ropitam samvuddhitam paripālitaṃ, so cha tas-a sāmi aho-i, tismā Jetavanam ti rocchati.*

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, I, p. 178: *Tindukāchīre ekasālake Mallikāya ārāme.*

<sup>3</sup> *Samangalavilāsinī*, II, p. 365: *Tindukāchīra-saṅkhātāya timbara-rakkha paṇṭigā parikkhittatta tindukāchīram . . . . . ettha paṭhamam ebāva sālā aho-i pachchhā . . . . . bahū sālā katā . . . . . Mallikāya paṇa Pasenadirañño deriyā nuyyāna-bhūto so pappaphalasampannārāmo.*

<sup>4</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II, p. 108.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* II, p. 127.

<sup>6</sup> *Dhammapadam Commentary*, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 386-387.

<sup>7</sup> Edited by Buhler (*Vienna Oriental Journal*, X, pp. 138 ff., I, A., XXV, pp. 216 ff.); Fleet (*J. R. A. S.*, 1907, pp. 510 ff.), and Barua (*Annals of the Bharatpur Oriental Research Institute*, XI, pp. 32 ff.; *I. H. Q.*, X., pp. 54-6).

<sup>8</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, p. 190.

city which accommodated fifty-seven thousand families and which was the 'principal source of income' (*āyamukhabhūtā*) of the kingdom of Kāśī-Kosala, comprising eighty thousand localities and extending over three hundred leagues.<sup>1</sup> These also keep us in the dark as to the actual plan of the city. It may be safely presumed that the general plan of Śrāvastī was similar to those of other cities of the time. It must have been surrounded by a wall provided with gates on four or more sides. Within the wall the city must have three broad rings or divisions, viz., central, outer and outermost, the royal palace and the court occupying the centre. The road arrangements must have been so planned as to facilitate patrol duty. There must have been proper allocation of sites for quarters of the officials, religious and educational institutions, private residences, bazars and even prostitute's quarters. The wall and the city gates remained till the 5th and 7th centuries of the Christian era, when Fā-Hien and Hiuen-Tsang visited the place. The earlier pilgrim has expressly referred to the southern gate<sup>2</sup> and the later pilgrim to the eastern.<sup>3</sup> The *Dhammapada Commentary* refers to the *Uttaradvāra* (northern gate).<sup>4</sup> There is a clear reference in the *Kosala-Saṃyutta* to the royal palace of Pasenadi.<sup>5</sup> The Jaina *Bhagavatī-Sūtra* refers to a potter-shop (undoubtedly within a bazar) which had become a notable retreat of the Ājīvikas. Buddhist literature is not lacking in references to the courtezans who lived somewhere within the city-wall. That the city was enclosed by a wall and had gates allowing ingress and egress is also borne out by a Bharhut sculpture, vividly depicting a processional chariot-drive of Pasenadi out of the city. The early records of Buddhism preserve the memory of King Pasenadi going out of the city either in a royal chariot yoked with the best of steeds<sup>6</sup> or occasionally on the back of the state-elephant called *Ekapuṇḍarika*<sup>7</sup> which unmistakably goes to show that there were spacious roads from each of the city gates leading to the Palace.<sup>8</sup> The same set of records still keeps up the memory of the river *Achiravatī* on the western bank of which the city was situated, the wheat fields which it nourished on its banks,<sup>9</sup> the bathing of the local people in its waters<sup>10</sup> and the swimming of the cattle across it. The city was undoubtedly rich, populous and flourishing. It shone forth in all its splendour as a queen of the cities and towns in the kingdom of Kosala. Apart from the religious establishments of the Brahmins and the Ājīvikas within the city wall, it had

<sup>1</sup> *Samantapāsādikā*, p. 614: *Sāvatthi nāma sattapaññāsāya-kulasatasahasseehi ajjhāvutthā, aṭṭigāmasatthasapattimanditānaṃ tiyojanasatikānaṃ dvīṇaṃ Kāśī-Kosalavuttānaṃ āyamukhabhūtā.*

<sup>2</sup> Beal's *Buddhist Records*, I, p. xlv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Dhammapada Commentary*, III, p. 380.

<sup>5</sup> *Samyutta-Nikāya*, I, p. 75: *Tena kho pana samayena rājā Pasenadi-Kosalo Mallikāya deviyā saddhim upari-pasāḍavaragato hoti.*

<sup>6</sup> *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I, p. 149, II, p. 118.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 112: *Tena kho pana samayena rājā Pasenadi-Kosalo Ekapuṇḍarikaṃ nāgaṃ abhirūhitvā Sāvatthiyā niyyāti divādivassa.*

<sup>8</sup> This may be easily inferred from the *Samyutta Nikāya*, I, p. 95, where Buddha says to Pasenadi: '*Seyyathāpi mahārāja puriso pāsādā vā hatthikkhaṇḍaṃ oroheyya, hatthikkhaṇḍā vā assa-piṭṭhiṃ oroheyya, assapiṭṭhiyā vā pallankaṃ oroheyya, pallankā vā pathaviṃ oroheyya, pathaviyā vā andhakaram oroheyya.*

<sup>9</sup> *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 511.

<sup>10</sup> *Vinaya Piṭaka*, I, 293.

in its neighbourhood two famous monastic establishments of the Buddhists, viz., the *Jetavana* and the *Pubbārāma* on its south-side. In its neighbourhood was also to be seen the *Ekasālakatiṇḍuka* grove of Queen Mallikā provided with suitable shelters for the chance-visitors among the wandering ascetics (*Paribbājakas*) and other religious, and proverbially resounded with voices of serious discussion of the problems of religion and philosophy (*samayappavādaka tiṇḍukachire*).<sup>1</sup> There were separate retreats for the *Niggaṇṭhas* (Jains) and other *Titthiyas*, particularly the *Ājīvikas*. The *C'habbaggiya bhikkhus*, notorious in the Buddhist Vinaya tradition, built a centre of their own near the city in a place frequented by the people. They managed to have *pariveṇas* built for them, to lay out the flower and fruit gardens and to make the religion attractive to the youths of the locality.<sup>2</sup>

Thus it may be easy to imagine that Śrāvastī was not only a great emporium of Indian trade but also a renowned centre of religion and culture. As a matter of fact, the Buddhist texts refer to various occasions on which the Brahmin *mahāsālas*, the wandering ascetics, and all recluses including those belonging to the Buddhist order visited Śrāvastī and its neighbourhood and met in conferences for the settlement of doubtful points.<sup>3</sup> The visits of all these men of religion became so frequent and in such large numbers that King Pasenadi found it necessary to maintain a royal storehouse (*koṭṭhāgāra*) within the city, where stocks of oil and ghee for use by those visitors, were kept ready, but the supply had to be stringently restricted to consumption on the spot.<sup>4</sup>

### III. JETAVANA AND PŪRVĀRAMA

The *Jetavana* (also called *Jetārāma*, *Jetuyyāma*) is one of those royal gardens in northern India which was destined to become a favourite retreat of Buddha and an early centre of Buddhism. In this respect Jetavana ranks indeed with such other gardens as *Veṇuvana* and *Jīvaka's* mango-grove near *Rājagaha*, *Mahāvana* near *Vesālī*, the *Banyan-grove* near *Kapilavatthu*, *Ghositārāma* near *Kosambī*, the *Isipatana* deer-park near *Benares*, and the *Deerpark* called *Bhesakalāvana* near *Sumsumāragiri*. The term *Jetavana*, met with throughout Buddhist literature is not to be understood in its original sense as the name of a private garden belonging to Prince Jeta. To the Buddhists it is the name of a Buddhist monastic establishment in the suburb of *Sāvattihī* (*Sāvattihī upanissāya*) which perpetuates at the same time the noble deeds of Prince Jeta, the original owner of the site. The same monastic institution is also represented as *Anāthapiṇḍika's ārāma*, which latter is a name intended to perpetuate the memory

<sup>1</sup> *Sumangalavilāsinī*, II, p. 365: *Samayam paravanti etthā ti samayappavādako. Tasmim kira thāne chankī-Tārakkha-Pokkharasāti-ppabhūtoyo brāhmaṇa-niggaṇṭhachelakaparibbājāladayo cha pabbajitā sammūṭṭitvā attano attano samayam vadanti, kathenti, dīpenti, tasmā so ārāmo samayappavādako ti vuccchati. . . . ettha paṭhamam ekāva sālā ahoṣi pachchhā mahāpuṇṇa-paribbājakaṃ nissāya bahūsālā katā.*

<sup>2</sup> *Samantapāsādikā*, p. 614; Barua in *I. H. Q.*, X, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Udānagabbhī Sutta*, quoted by Barua in *I. H. Q.*, X, p. 56: "Tena kho pana samayena raṇṇo Pasenadissa Kosalassa koṭṭhāgāre samayassa vā brāhmaṇassa vā sappissa vā telasavā yāvaduttham pātum diyyati no niharitum."

of Anāthapiṇḍika or Anāthapiṇḍada, the purchaser of the site.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Buddhists devised rather a long-drawn expression—*Sāvatthiyam Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme* to refer to the monastic establishment and site perpetuating the memory not only of Prince Jeta and banker Sudatta Anāthapiṇḍika but of the city of Śrāvastī as well. *Kosala-mandira* ("the temple of Kosala") was still another name of this establishment bespeaking the glory of the kingdom in which it was built.<sup>2</sup> With the erection of the Jetavana monastery and the formal dedication of the same to Buddha by Anāthapiṇḍika was planted the first permanent centre of Buddhism in Kosala proper, particularly in Śrāvastī. The earliest known account of this magnificent work of piety is contained in the *Vinaya-Chullavagga* and all the later accounts are substantially the same. Since his return from Rājagaha to Sāvatthī, the banker Anāthapiṇḍika was on the lookout for a suitable site which was neither very far from nor very near the city which was at the same time easy of communication, easily accessible to visitors, not overcrowded at day time, noiseless at night, bereft of tumults, sequestered, sombre,—a place fit for silent meditation. Prince Jeta's garden appeared to be the desired site. As soon as Prince Jeta had agreed to sell it, the banker employed his men to cut down all the trees and clear the site. The later accounts specifically say that all but one mango and four sandal trees were cut down. The Prince changed his mind and declined to part with his favourite garden, but according to the opinion of the legal experts (*Vohārika mahāmatta*) to whom the matter was referred, it was too late for the Prince to retract from the contract made. The prince then demanded an exorbitant price *viz.*, as many crores of gold-pieces (*hiraṇṇam*) as would be required to cover up the entire site. The banker forthwith engaged his men to cover up the site with a layer of gold-pieces in fulfilment of the condition of purchase. When nearly the whole of the site was covered up with eighteen crores and a small portion remained to be covered, Prince Jeta appeared on the scene and wanted to participate in this work of piety and utilized the whole amount of eighteen crores received from Anāthapiṇḍika as well as the sale proceeds of the trees in constructing a Koṭṭhaka. According to the Vinaya account the banker himself, at the cost of another eighteen crores, caused to be built a number of buildings as:—

- Vihāras* (dwelling-rooms),
- Pariveṇas* (retiring-rooms),
- Koṭṭhakas* (store-rooms over the gateways),
- Upatthānasālās* (service halls),
- Aggisālās* (halls with fire-places in them),
- Kappiyakuṭis* (storehouses outside the vihāra),
- Vachchakuṭis* (closets),
- Chaṇkamas* (cloisters),
- Chaṇkamanasālās* (halls for exercise),
- Udapānas* (wells),

<sup>1</sup> *Papañchasūdanī*, I, pp. 60-61.

<sup>2</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, p. 192: *Sāvatthiyam Kosala-mandire*.



a sitting shed, called *Karerimaṇḍalamāla*. The bower itself stood just between the *gandhakutī* and this shed. Accordingly the term *karerimaṇḍalamāla* is used to denote the *gandhakutī*, the *karerikutī*, as well as the *nisīdanasālā*. Each of the four buildings was erected at the cost of a hundred thousand coins.<sup>1</sup>

*Pūrvārāma* :—This is the second and later Buddhist monastery erected in the neighbourhood of Śrāvastī, to the north-east of Jetavana at a short distance from it, by the pious lady Viśākhā, the daughter-in-law of the banker Migāra (Mṛgadharma) who was at first a staunch lay-supporter of the Ājīvikas. She came to be honoured in Buddhist tradition as Migāra-mātā (mother of Migāra) for no other reason than that she was instrumental in winning over the banker from the Ājīvikas and effecting his conversion to Buddhism. The circumstances which eventually led to the erection of the Pūrvārāma monastery are related in the story of Viśākhā in the Dhammapada Commentary.<sup>2</sup> One day she returned home from the Jetavana monastery, forgetting all about her valuable necklace which she took off her person and inadvertently left behind in the monastery. On getting it back she became reluctant to wear it any longer as a personal ornament and made up her mind to erect a suitable residence for the *saṅgha* with the sale-proceeds of the ornament. She sold it off for nine crores and one hundred thousand which sum she utilized in purchasing the site near about the eastern gate (? of the city).<sup>3</sup> She spent another nine crores in erecting the monastery and an equal amount in celebrating the ceremony of dedication, the total expenditure amounting to twenty-seven crores. The materials used for the erection were both wood and stone (*rukka*, *pāsāpa*). The monastery stood up as a magnificent two-storeyed building with five hundred rooms on the ground floor and an equal number of rooms on the upper floor.<sup>4</sup> It has traditionally been known by the name of *Pūrvārāma Migāramātupāsāda*.

#### IV. ŚRĀVASTĪ IN RELIGIOUS TRADITION

Śrāvastī is the Chandrapurī or Chandrikāpurī of the Jains, noted as the birth-place of their third Tīrthaṅkara Sambhavanātha (Jaina Harivamśa Purāṇa, p. 717) and eighth Tīrthaṅkara Chandraprabhānātha.<sup>5</sup> It was here that Mahāvīra met Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta for the first time after their separation and after the latter had proclaimed himself as an independent teacher. Mahāvīra visited the city more than once and was every time well received.<sup>6</sup> He spent one rainy season at this place.<sup>7</sup> Nandinipriya, a wealthy house-holder and citizen of Śrāvastī

<sup>1</sup> *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, II, p. 407 : *Ek 'ekaṃ sata-sahassa-parichchāgena nipphannaṃ. Tesu Salaḷagharaṇi raññā Pasenadinā kārītaṃ, sesāni Anāthapiṇḍilena gahapatiṇā. Iti Bhagavā...thambhānaṃ upari kārīṭṭhāya devavimāna-kappāya Karerikutikāya viharati...Kareriṃaṇḍalamāle' ti tass 'eva Kareriṃaṇḍapassa avidūre katūya nisīdanasālāya. So kira Kareriṃaṇḍapo gandhakutikāya cha sālāya cha antare hoti. Tasmā gandhakutī pi Karerikutikā pi sālā pi Kareriṃaṇḍala-mālo ti vuccati.*

<sup>2</sup> *Dhammapada Commentary*, Vol. I, pp. 384-420.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, I, pp. 412-3 : *Pācīnadvāre saṅghassa vasaṇaṭṭhānaṃ kātun te yuttun Viśākhāti.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. 414 : *Heṭṭhabhūmiyaṃ pañcagatthasatāni uparibhūmiyaṃ pañche gatthasatāni gatthasahassapati-maṇḍilo pāsādo ahosi.*

<sup>5</sup> Shah, *Jainism of Northern India*, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> *Kalpasūtra*, *Subodhikā Ṭīkā*, pp. 103, 105, 106 ; *Avasyaka Sūtra*, p. 221.

<sup>7</sup> Stevenson, *Heart of Jainism*, p. 42.



who was the owner of a treasure of four crore measures of gold, became a lay-supporter of Jainism.<sup>1</sup> Kapila, son of Kāśyapa, was sent to Śrāvastī to study under Indradatta, a friend of his father, who was willing to instruct the boy and procured for him free board and lodging in a rich man's house.<sup>2</sup> Maghavan, a son of King Samudravijaya of Śrāvastī, became a powerful monarch.<sup>3</sup> Keśi, formerly a follower of Pārśva and subsequently a follower of Mahāvīra once visited Śrāvastī.<sup>4</sup> It was at Saravana near Śrāvastī that Gosāla, the great leader of the Ājīvikas, was born of Maskari or Parivrājaka parents who used to wander about in the country with a portable picture gallery, instructing people by means of pictures. It was in the city of Śrāvastī that Gosāla declared his Jinahood and found a good following among the local people. It was here again that he mostly lived and passed away. The Ājīvika canon consisting of eight *mahānimittas* and two *maggas* was compiled at Śrāvastī with the ten *Pūrvas* as its authoritative basis. The banker Migāra, the father-in-law of the Buddhist lady Viśikhī and others were to be counted among the staunch lay-supporters of the Ājīvikas,<sup>5</sup> who were naked ascetics and who found a strong-hold in Śrāvastī.

Śrāvastī was equally a strong-hold of Brahmanism, both secular and transcendental. Nālaṅgha and Saṅjaya Ākāśagotta were the two Brahmins attached to the royal family of Pāsenadi. Bāvari, a leader of the Jāṭilas, with his hermitage on the bank of the Cudāvarī, was honoured as the Purohita to King Mahākosala and to his son and successor Pāsenadi. Vedic sacrifices involving the slaughter of animal life were regularly performed in the city under the auspices of the King of Kosala.<sup>6</sup> Powerful Vedic institutions were maintained as already noted, on royal grants and endowments, both within and outside the city of Śrāvastī. The heads of these institutions were all Traividya, unsurpassed masters of Vedic literature. The city maintained in its suburb the Mallikārjuna as a spacious retreat for the Brahmanical wandering ascetics who were powerful disputants and controversialists of the age. Other orders of religious also found a retreat (*śrāma*) near the city. In point of fact the Jāṭilas, the Niggeṇhis (Jains), the Aśvabahas, the Ekasāṭakas and the Paribbājakas, each distinguished by some visible characteristics, were very familiar figures to the people of the city, so much so that it was easy for the royal spies to hide their secret mission under the garb of those religious.<sup>7</sup> The Brahmin *āhāsālas* were mostly interested in the discussions of the problem of caste and the social order based on the authority of the Vedas: The site of the 'shavelings' was repugnant to some of the Brahmin puritans. The Brahmin opposition was at

<sup>1</sup> *Uvāsagadasāo*, pp. 166-67.

<sup>2</sup> *Jaina Sūtras* (S. B. E.), Part II, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 120.

<sup>5</sup> *Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta University*, Vol. II.

<sup>6</sup> *Samyutta-Nikaya*, I, p. 76: *Idha rañño Pa-enadi-Kosalassa mahāyañño pachchupathhito hoti. Pañcha cha usabha-satāni pañcha cha vachchatarasatāni, pañcha vachchatarisatāni pañcha cha urabbhasatāni thūvūpanitāni honti yaññatthāya.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, I, p. 78.

one time so obstinate that a banker of Śrāvastī had to apply for the help of the royal army in erecting a Buddhist stūpa.<sup>1</sup>

Buddhist tradition tends to create the impression that the whole atmosphere of the city of Śrāvastī and its surrounding was surcharged with the influence of Buddha and Buddhism. This city was 'the resort of many wealthy nobles, brahmins, heads of houses and believers in the Tathāgata'<sup>2</sup>. It was in this city that the Buddha gave religious instruction to the citizens whose darkness of ignorance was thereby dispelled.<sup>3</sup> In one of the Jātakas we read that there was at Sāvattihī a rich merchant who was worth eighteen crores.<sup>4</sup> In another Jātaka we are told that at Sāvattihī, in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, food was always kept ready for 500 brethren; the same thing is also told about Visākhā and the king of Kosala.<sup>5</sup> Buddha was once invited by a generous donor of the city, and for seven days Buddha and his companions were entertained by him with many gifts and requisites.<sup>6</sup> We read in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* that Buddha delivered a sermon on *bāla* and *paṇḍita* (the foolish and the learned) to the Bhikkhus (III, p. 163 ff.). We are further told that Mahāpajāpati Gotamī saw the Buddha with five hundred bhikkhūṇīs, and requested him to give religious instructions to the bhikkhūṇīs (*Ibid.*, III, p. 270). The *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* points out that while revered Nandaka was once dwelling at Sāvattihī in Pubbārāma, the palace of Migāramātā, Salla, grandson of Migārasettihī, and Rohaṇa, grandson of Pekuniyasettihī, went to Nandaka and enquired of the true religion from him and Nandaka gave a very suitable reply expounding the main principles of his Master's religion (I, pp. 193 ff.). According to the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya*, Sāvattihī was often visited by Buddha and on many an occasion he delivered discourses expounding the growing tenets of his new religion. Here he delivered a sermon to Anāthapiṇḍika about the arivasāvakas (noble disciples of the Buddha).<sup>7</sup> At Jetavana Buddha also gave a discourse on two kinds of faults<sup>8</sup>; while on another occasion his disciple Sāriputta discoursed on the three kinds of Puggalas.<sup>9</sup> Buddha discoursed on three kinds of sick persons<sup>10</sup>. While at the palace of Migāramātā he addressed a discourse to Visākhā on the three kinds of Uposatha and further he spoke about the longevity of the gods.<sup>11</sup> Sāriputta also held a discourse at the palace of Migāramātā near Sāvattihī on external and internal ties.<sup>12</sup> The venue of discussion on the cessation of *rāga*, *moha*, and *dosa* between Channa paribbājaka and Ānanda was also Sāvattihī.<sup>13</sup> Here Buddha spoke to Rohita on the

<sup>1</sup> *Dīrghavadāna*, pp. 243-244.

<sup>2</sup> *Buddhist, Suttas, S. B. E.*, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> *Bodhisattvavadāna-kūṭpalatā* 6, 3; 79, 2; 82, 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Jāt.* (Cowell), Vol. VI, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> *Jāt.* (Cowell), Vol. IV, p. 91.

<sup>6</sup> *Jāt.* (Cowell), Vol. IV, pp. 148-49.

<sup>7</sup> *S. N.*, V, p. 387.

<sup>8</sup> *A. N.*, I, pp. 47 ff.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 120 ff.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 205 ff.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 63 ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 215 ff.

place where one is not subject to birth and death. While at the palace of Migāramātā he spoke of the four kinds of bhikkhus.<sup>1</sup>

While residing at Jetavana, Buddha was once questioned by Mallikādevī, queen of Pasenadi, about poor, wretched and ugly looking women, rich but ugly looking women, beautiful but wretched and poor women and wealthy and beautiful women.<sup>2</sup> Here also the princess Sumanā with 500 princesses went to Buddha and questioned him about the fate of two of Buddha's disciples, one of whom was charitable, and another stingy, after death, to which a suitable reply was given.<sup>3</sup> Here he instructed Anāthapiṇḍika about the utility of wealth, and about the difficulty in obtaining longevity, beauty, happiness, fame and heaven.<sup>4</sup> After the death of Mallikādevī. Pasenadi afflicted with grief went to the Master at Jetavana and received consolation from him.<sup>5</sup> He spoke here of the five *nīvaraṇas*<sup>6</sup> (obstacles) as also of the five precepts<sup>7</sup> and *dāna*.<sup>8</sup> While he was here, the great *yajña* of *Uggatasarīra* brahmin was being performed with elaborate sacrifices. The brahmin informed the Buddha thus: "If sacrifice be offered to the fire and if sacrificial wood is raised by anybody he will accumulate the greatest merit." He spoke of three other kinds of fire which one should honour and worship.<sup>9</sup> He went to Anāthapiṇḍika's house and gave instructions to Anāthapiṇḍika's daughter-in-law Sujātā, on seven kinds of wives.<sup>10</sup> Here he delivered a sermon to the bhikkhus on the good effect of developing *mettā*<sup>11</sup> and on the merit and importance of observing *uposatha* consisting of eight *aṅgas* or precepts.<sup>12</sup> He spoke here to Visākhā Migāramātā about the eight and four qualities of women.<sup>13</sup> He also spoke to Anāthapiṇḍika about the way in which charities should be dispensed<sup>14</sup> and to the bhikkhus about the precepts and the observance of the precepts as given in the *Pātimokkha*.<sup>15</sup> Once Pasenadi came to Buddha, returning victorious from the battle-field. The king fell at his feet, kissing them, and spoke highly of the qualities of the Master.<sup>16</sup>

Jetavana plays an equally prominent part in the Buddhist tradition as contained in Sanskrit Buddhist texts. The *Lalitavistara* (ch. i) says that Buddha stayed with his retinue of bhikkhus for a number of times and received hundreds of householders as followers and disciples. It was at the Jetavana grove that Devadatta sent assassins to kill the Buddha who, however, received them very

<sup>1</sup> A. N., II, pp. 183-84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, pp. 262 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, III, pp. 32 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, III, pp. 45-48.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, III, p. 57.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, III, pp. 63-64.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, III, p. 203.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, III, p. 336.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 41 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 91 ff.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 150-151.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 248 ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 267 and 269 ff.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, pp. 392 ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, V, pp. 131-132.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, V, pp. 65 ff.

hospitably.<sup>1</sup> It was here also that Bimbisāra and Prasenajit met the Buddha and did him homage.<sup>2</sup>

Here at Sāvattthī Buddha taught kammatṭhāna to five hundred bhikkhus. He taught the *Mettā suttam* to the same party.<sup>3</sup> Mahāsuvanna, a banker of Sāvattthī, had two sons, the first of whom became a bhikkhu under the Buddha and was known as Chakkhupāla.<sup>4</sup> Maṭṭhakunḍali was the son of a rich and stingy Brahmin of Sāvattthī who became a devout follower of the Master.<sup>5</sup> Thullatissa was the Buddha's father's sister's son and lived at Sāvattthī as a bhikkhu.<sup>6</sup> Kāliyakkhinī was a yakshī worshipped by the people of Sāvattthī who could foretell drought and excessive rainfall.<sup>7</sup>

Sāvattthī contributed a fair number of bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs who acquired fame and renown in the Buddhist congregation for the purity of their lives. Paṭāchārā was the daughter of a rich banker of Sāvattthī. She afterwards became a bhikkhunī.<sup>8</sup> Kisāgotamī was the daughter of a setṭhī of Sāvattthī. After the death of her only child, she went to Buddha with the dead body and requested him to bring the dead back to life. Buddha delivered a sermon which led her to become a bhikkhunī.<sup>9</sup> Anitthigandhakumāra fallen from the *Brahmaloka*, was reborn in a rich family of Sāvattthī and was eventually converted by Buddha.<sup>10</sup> Vakkali, born in a Brahmin family of Sāvattthī became a bhikkhu seeing the beauty of the Buddha's body.<sup>11</sup> A servant of a Brahmin of Sāvattthī became a bhikkhu and subsequently attained arhatship.<sup>12</sup> The *Theragāthā* informs us that the thera Kaṅkhārevata came of a wealthy family of Sāvattthī.<sup>13</sup> Vira was born in the family of a minister to King Pasenadi of Sāvattthī.<sup>14</sup> Kuṇḍadhāna, another inhabitant of Sāvattthī, when advanced in years, heard the Master preach and left the world. He was provided with all the necessities of life by Pasenadi.<sup>15</sup> Ajita, a Sāvattthī man and a follower of Bāvari, entered the Order and became an *arhat*.<sup>16</sup> In the *Therīgāthā* we are told that Sumanā was born at Sāvattthī as the sister of the king of Kośala. She heard the Master preach the doctrine to King Pasenadi. Eventually she entered the Order and became an *arhat*.<sup>17</sup> According to the *Suttanta-Nipāta*, Buddha spoke to a group of Brāhmaṇas about the salutary customs of ancient Brāhmaṇas, and how those customs came gradually to be undermined by sin, and greed, and immorality. The Brahmins were

<sup>1</sup> *Avudānaśataka*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 12-13, 45.

<sup>3</sup> *Khuddakapāṭha Commentary*, pp. 231 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Dhammapada Commentary*, I, pp. 3 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, I, 25 ff.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, I, pp. 37 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, I, pp. 45 ff.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, II, pp. 260 ff.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, II, pp. 270 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, III, pp. 281 ff.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, IV, pp. 119 ff.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, IV, p. 167.

<sup>13</sup> *Psalm of the Brethren*, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>17</sup> *Psalm of the Sisters*, pp. 19-20.

pleased to hear this and took refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṃgha.<sup>1</sup> Here at Sāvattthī, Pasura, a *paribbājaka*, held a disputation with Sāriputta. He met Lāludāyī at Jetavana and received ordination from him. The *Vimānavatthu commentary* alludes to a number of instances where many men and women of Śrāvastī, believers in the Buddha and his religion, who after death were reborn in various heavens where they enjoyed heavenly bliss.<sup>2</sup> The *Dīgha Nikāya* tells us that while immediately after Buddha's *parinibbāṇa*, Ānanda was dwelling at Jetavana, Subha, son of Todeyya, came to Sāvattthī on some business, and invited Ānanda who accepted the invitation. He had a talk with Ānanda about the *dhammas* preached by the Blessed One.<sup>3</sup> The *Vinaya-Piṭaka* gives a most realistic picture of the life of the inmates of the two great monasteries of Jetavana and Pubbārāma. The same *Piṭaka* also introduces us to the *Chhabbaggiya Bhikkhus*, all of whom were youngmen of Sāvattthī.

The extent of influence of Buddhism over the religious life of the people of Śrāvastī is sought to be brought out in the *Milindapañha* (p. 349) in the following tradition which evidently exaggerates the truth :

“*Nagare mahārāja Sāvattthiyā pañcakoṭimattā ariyasāvaka Bhagavato upāsaka-upāsikāya sattapaññāsa sahasāni tīṇi satahasāni anāgāmi-phale patitthitā, te sabbe pi gihī yeva na pabbajitā.*” “In the city of Sāvattthī. O king, five crores in number are the revered disciples : among the lay followers of the Blessed One, men and women, three hundred and fifty-seven thousand persons are established in the fruition stage of non-returners. All of them are householders ; none has renounced the world.”

## V. DECLINE OF ŚRĀVASTĪ

With the downfall of the kingdom of Kosala began the decline of Śrāvastī, its capital. It continued, however, to be a religious centre right up to the 12th century A.D. Ānanda, Kumāra Kassapa and other immediate disciples of Buddha, who lived after his demise, carried on the preaching work in Śrāvastī, Tudigāma, Setavya (subsequently known as Payāsi or Bayāsi), and other places in Kosala.<sup>4</sup> The *Dīvyāvadāna* gives an account of Aśoka's pilgrimage to Jetavana where he paid his worship at the four stūpas, one erected in honour of Sāriputra and the remaining three in honour of Maudgalyāyana, Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda. It does not credit Aśoka with any other work of piety at Śrāvastī.<sup>5</sup> The *Mahāvamsa* speaks of the visit of Mahāthera Piyadassi to Ceylon from the Jetavana-vihāra with one thousand bhikkhus during the reign of King Duṭṭhagāmani.<sup>6</sup> The sculptures of Bharhut and Bodhi-Gayā, carved in the second and first centuries B. C., illustrate incidents which took place in Śrāvastī and Jetavana in Buddha's time. The two inscriptions of Bhikshu Bala, incised in the early Kushāṇa age,

<sup>1</sup> P. T. S., Edn., 50-55.

<sup>2</sup> *Vimānavatthu Commentary*, pp. 56-57, 61, 109-110, 149-56, etc.

<sup>3</sup> D. N., I, pp. 204 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, I, 204 : II, 316.

<sup>5</sup> *Dīvyāvadāna*, pp. 394-6.

<sup>6</sup> *Mahāvamsa*, Ch. 29, verse 32.

unmistakably show that the entire site of the Jetavana monastery came into the possession of the Buddhist sect of Sarvāstivādins. The inscriptions of the same monk Bala, found at Sārnāth and Mathurā, go to prove that the Sarvāstivādins gained preponderance also at Sārnāth and Mathurā. Two other inscriptions of the Kushāṇa period, found at Saheṭh-Maheṭh, expressly say that the Bodhisattva images installed at the site, were carved by the sculptors of Mathurā.

Śrāvastī declined indeed in wealth, population and political importance. The Pāli legends record with regret that Anāthapiṇḍika, the famous donor of the Jetavana monastery, died penniless after having spent fifty-four crores on the erection of the vihāra, lost 18 crores in business and 18 crores by the action of the river Achiravatī which swept away his hoarding on its bank.<sup>1</sup>

By the time of Fā-Hien's visit in the beginning of the 5th century A.D., there were 'very few inhabitants,' 'altogether perhaps about 200 families,' in the city of Śrāvastī which was so populous in Buddha's time. Towering shrines were built in after times on the site of the ruined vihāra of Mahāprajāpati, on the foundations of the house of Sudatta-Anāthapiṇḍika and on the spot where the dead body of Thera Aṅgulimāla was cremated in the city. The Jetavana monastery, built by Sudatta, lay to the south of the ruined city, 1,200 paces on the road from its south gate, on the west side of it. The monastery opened towards the east, and its main entrance was flanked by two side chambers with two stone pillars in front of them, one to the left bearing a wheel on its capital and the other to the right bearing an ox—a description well-suited to Asokan monoliths. There were tanks with clear water, and the luxuriant groves and flower gardens around the convent were quite befitting the name of Jetavana. An image carved in sandal wood was then known to have been the earliest figure on the model of which later figures were made. Near about the sandal-wood figure was the small vihāra in which Buddha used to live just on the south side of a larger vihāra. The main building of Jetavana monastery had been seven-storeyed before it was burnt down accidentally by fire.

The monastery accommodated a large number of inmates. The Pūrvārāma erected by Viśākhā six or seven li to the north-east of the Jetavana vihāra was completely in ruin. The extensive garden enclosure of the Jetavana vihāra had two gates, one opening towards the east and the other towards the north. The main chapel was just in the middle of that enclosure. Memorial shrines were erected on the various spots where Buddha walked for exercise or sat down. These shrines had all distinctive names given them. Men in after times located the spots associated with the notable incidents of Buddha's life, and befittingly sanctified them. They erected, for instance, a vihāra on the spot where Buddha met and defeated the heretics, more than 70 feet high, and it contained a sitting figure of Buddha. To the east of the road was a temple (devālaya) belonging to the heretics, which was named 'Shadow-covered' and which was of the same height as the vihāra opposite which it was built. Traditionally there were ninety saṅghārāmas surrounding the Jetavana vihāra, all of whom with the

<sup>1</sup> *Dhammapada Commentary*, Vol. III, p. 10.

exception of one were tenanted by the monks. There were ninety-six heretical sects, each of whom had its adherents in Kosala. The inhabitants of this country of Mid-India built hospices by the side of solitary roads for the shelter of travellers. The followers of Buddha, too, as they passed to and fro, were entertained by them. Devadatta also had a body of disciples still existing, who paid religious reverence to three former Buddhas but not to Buddha Śākyamuni.<sup>1</sup>

To Hiuen T'sang who visited the place in the 7th century A.D., the kingdom of Kosala was known as the kingdom of Śrāvastī. The chief town was 'desert and ruined' and there was 'no record as to its limits'. The ruins of the walls encompassing the royal precincts gave a circuit of about 20 li (3 miles). There were but a few inhabitants. Cereals grew in abundance, the climate was soft and agreeable, and the manners of the people were honest and pure. They applied themselves to learning and loved religion. There were several hundreds of saṅghārāmas, mostly in ruin, with very few religious followers, who studied the books of the Sammatīya school of Buddhism. There were 100 Deva temples with very many heretics. Within the old precincts of the royal city were some ancient foundations including the remains of the palace of King Prasenajit. Not far to the east from this was the ruinous foundation on which was built a small stūpa. The ruins represented the great Hall of the Law built by Prasenajit in honour of Buddha. By the side of that hall, not far from it, a stūpa was built above the ruins of the vihāra built by Prasenajit for Mahāprajāpati bhikṣuṇī. Further east was a stūpa to mark the site of the house of Sudatta, and by the side of it, still another stūpa marking the spot where Aṅgulimāla gave up his heresy. The Jetavana vihāra lay to the south of the city of Śrāvastī, at a distance of 5 or 6 li (about a mile), and it had two Asokan pillars at its eastern gate, the left-hand pillar bearing a wheel and the right-hand pillar the figure of an ox.

To the north-east of Jetavana was a stūpa marking the spot where Buddha washed a sick bhikṣu with water. To the north-west of it was a small stūpa built in honour of Mudgalaputra with a well near it. By the side of it was a stūpa built by Aśoka enshrining the relics of Buddha and marking the spot with a pillar. There were three ditches, unfathomable in their depth, one to the east of the vihāra, and two wide ditches to the south of the first ditch, one by the side of the other.

At a distance of 60 or 70 paces east of the Jetavana vihāra was another vihāra about 60 feet high, enshrining a sitting figure of Buddha. Further east was a Deva temple of equal size with the vihāra,—the temple which was no other than the one called "Shadow-covered" by Fā Hien. Three or four li to the east of the latter vihāra was a stūpa built in honour of Śāriputra. There was another vihāra by the side, with another stūpa in front of it, marking the spot where Buddha accepted Viśākhā's offer to build a vihāra. On the south of that stūpa was another stūpa with a tank near by marking the spot where Virūdhaka-rāja slaughtered the Śākyā maidens.

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<sup>1</sup> Beal's *Buddhist Records*, I, pp. xliv-xlviii.

To the north-west of Jetavana 3 or 4 li. lay the forest of Andhavana containing places where pious people built stūpas or erected posts with inscriptions.<sup>1</sup>

There are some inscriptions, written in Nāgarī characters, to indicate that Jetavana remained a centre of Buddhism in the 8th or 9th century A.D. Even as late as the 12th century the great convent of Jetavana continued to be a centre of Buddhist learning and culture where lived a large community of Buddhist monks enjoying the royal favour of the king of Kanauj.

Thus from the days of Buddha to about the middle of the 12th century A.D. Śrāvastī with its most important establishment, the Jetavana, continued to be the centre of Buddhism linking up with it the vicissitudes of a great religion through a passage of about eighteen hundred years.

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<sup>1</sup> Beal's *Buddhist Records*, II, pp. 1-13.





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